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Near East/North Africa Report

(FOUO 30/81)



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NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

PLO PARIS REPRESENTATIVE SUS INTERVIEWED

LD141629 Paris LE NOUVEL OBSERVATEUR in French 8-14 Aug 81 pp 38-39

[Interview with PLO Paris representative Ibrahim Sus by Guy Sitbon: "Victory In 2 or 3 Years"--undated]

[Excerpt] [Question] Mitterrand is rather pro-Israeli, is he not?

[Answer] The attitude of the Socialist Party toward the PLO savored of bias but I believe Mitterrand could play an important role for peace. He would like to visit Israel. Why not? He has the right to do so. However, the natural counterpart of this would be an invitation for Yasir Arafat to come to Paris for talks. This is obvious, provided France is willing to contribute to the restoration of peace in the region in order to ensure that justice is done to the Palestinian people.

[Question] You say: We want peace. You could secure it tomorrow. You just have to stop firing at Israel, it will leave you in peace.

"Listen," one of the Palestinians said to me, "Let's have a serious conversation and not exchange propaganda statements. What you have just said is Israeli propaganda. We know it."

They weren't going to get round me like that.

"Nonetheless it was you who sparked off this most recent war in July by bombarding Qiryat Shemona and Nahariyya."

[Answer] "They have been throwing all the means they have against us for 18 months," Sousse replies, "and you say it is us who set light to the powder keg?"

[Question] You responded in an unusual fashion. You must have made a decision to do so.

[Answer] This phase has ended in a Palestinian victory. It is a military victory: almost all the Israeli generals admit they are incapable of destroying us. It is a political victory: they were forced to negotiate a cease-fire; they have been isolated diplomatically. Israel has elected slightly insane leaders. Indeed its generals are arrogant and narrow-minded. Without wishing to boast I think that we have intelligence on our side now.

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[Question] What about this 12-day war?

[Answer] It is the second direct war between us and Israel. The first is the one we call the 8-day war which took place in southern Lebanon in April 1978. The PLO has asserted itself at international level. It is possible to win recognition without firepower. Our Palestinian National Council is aware of that. The Americans are now forced to admit that we exist. The Soviets already recognize us. The solution could be close. [answer ends]

In 10, 20, 30 years..., I said sarcastically.

[Answer] You would be surprised. It may be in 2 or 3 years. The fruit is ripening. Our victory is within reach. We are prepared to wage war for another 100 years. But things could move quickly.

Each To His Oppressor

[Question] What would the solution be?

[Answer] Our victory. A Palestinian state. A flag, a passport, a government.

[Question] It seems that you are already secretly negotiating with the Americans.

[Answer] Nothing is being done in secret. Everything will be done in the open. We are prepared to talk with them. They must recognize us as the Palestinian people's sole representatives, which is obvious, and must recognize our rights. Reagan can do it because his friendship for Israel is above suspicion. Those who wish to prevent the Israelis from drawing the region into a holocaust into which they are blindly pushing us must force them to adopt a realistic view of things.

[Question] Holocaust? You are giving me the shudders.

[Answer] I will tell you that I don't care a damn about Israel's existence. What worries me is Palestine's nonexistence. What obsesses me is the thousands of Palestinians who have been killed, all our victims. I will not be able to forgive Begin and his generals any more than the Jews have forgiven the Nazis. The bombs they are throwing in our faces are just the same as they received. And today they deny us the right to exist and threaten all the Arabs. I am speaking about today not about the past. Each to his oppressor. As far as my people are concerned the oppressors are Jews. I pray that they will change their attitude. I am fighting to force them to do so. Nonetheless all the Jews are not like Begin. I would like to mention Nahum Goldman, Uri Avneri, Peled, Israel Shahak and many others.

[Question] You say that peace might be close. How can it be achieved?

[Answer] Israel must recognize the existence of the Palestinian people, it must recognize the PLO, our right to self-determination and finally our right to return. That's all.

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[Question] What is preventing you from recognizing Israel? They will not trust you until you do.

[Answer] Recognition is an act of sovereignty. Give us our sovereignty and we will recognize whoever we wish.

[Question] Where would this Palestinian state be?

[Answer] On every inch of liberated Palestinian territory. [answer ends]

One of his friends then interrupted:

"Ibrahim is giving you the official position. In fact the position is very clear and everybody knows it: we want a Palestinian state on the West Bank and in Gaza."

"And Galilee, which is completely inhabited by Palestinians," Sousse interjected. "People must realize that we will not make concessions, that there are no hard-liners and moderates among us."

The other man stuck to his position: "No. Why Galilee? The West Bank and Gaza." After that, I asked? "After that there will be peace," the other said.

[Question] Real peace?

[Answer] Real peace.

[Question] Forever?

[Answer] Forever, we certainly hope so.

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INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

FLOW OF INTER-ARAB FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE NOTED

London THE MAGHREB REVIEW in English Mar-Aug 1980, Vol 5 Nos. 2-4 pp 57-62

[Article by Abderrahman Robana]

[Text]

Introduction

Following the massive oil revenues accruing to the Arab oil producing and exporting countries, mainly since 1974 when oil prices quadrupled, Arab aid in general, and more specifically inter-Arab financial assistance has played a very significant role in world economic and financial developments. It is worth noting here that non-oil producing developing countries will have a deficit of about 65 billion U.S. dollars in 1980 compared with the 45 billion deficit in 1979. At present total Arab aid amounts to not less than 20 billion U.S. dollars and far exceeds both the 0.7% of GNP target set by the United Nations' Second Development Decade Program and the 0.85% of GNP of the most generous countries in the Western industrial world.¹ The massive Arab aid to Arab, African and Asian countries continues to grow even although donors such as Saudi Arabia and the Arab states on the Gulf themselves need technical aid and the diversification of their future sources of income, as at present they rely solely on revenues from oil, an exhaustible and non-reproducible resource.

In addition to direct assistance to about sixty countries around the world, large commitments were made to international and regional aid institutions, such as the World Bank and the IMF.

While more than half of Arab financial assistance goes to non-Arab countries (see Table 1 below) I shall consider here only flows of Arab financial aid *within* the Arab world, whether or not it is concessional and the way it is channeled.

Table I
Percentage Distribution of Total Arab Financial Assistance
(1975-1978)

	1978	1977	1976	1975
To Arab countries	40.4%	45.5%	50.0%	39.6%
To Non-Arab countries	59.6%	54.5%	50.0%	40.4%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Various Arab Funds Annual Reports

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The Channels of Inter-Arab Financial Assistance

Long before the dramatic surge in oil prices and in the revenues received by oil producing countries in 1974, two Arab countries established funds to aid other Arab countries. The funds were the Kuwait Fund, established in 1961 and the Abu-Dhabi Fund established in 1971.

Since 1974, however, several Arab Funds have come into existence in a variety of institutions: some are multilateral, others are bilateral while others are special. The overall objective of this variety of funds is to promote the process of economic development of Arab, African and Asian countries — either on a country-by-country basis or on a regional economic integration basis — by encouraging Arab joint-venture projects and economic infrastructure. The combined authorized capital of these funds is approximately 15 billion U.S. dollars and more than half has already been committed to 60 countries. Specific objectives of some well-established multilateral, bilateral Arab funds and special Arab funds are examined here.

Multilateral Arab Institutions for Financial Co-operation

The major Arab multilateral financial institutions include, the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF), the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD), the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), the Arab Investment Company (AIC), the Inter-Arab Investment Guarantee Corporation (IAIGC), and the Arab Fund for Technical Assistance to Arab and African Countries (AFTAAAC). The specific objectives, operations and resources of these funds are examined below:

1) OBJECTIVES**a) The Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) 2**

The AMF was established on February 2, 1977 with an authorized capital of 1.3 billion dollars as of June 1979. The AMF's Articles of Agreement include the following goals:

—To correct disequilibria in the balance of payments of member-states.

—To promote the stability of exchange rates of Arab currencies, rendering them mutually convertible, and striving for the removal of restrictions on current payments between member-states.

—To establish such policies and modes of Arab monetary co-operation as will achieve the quickest pace of economic integration, and speed the process of economic growth in the member-states;

To tender advice, whenever called upon to do so, with regards to policies relating to the investment of the financial resources of member-states in foreign markets, so as to insure the preservation of the real value of these resources and to promote their growth;

—To promote the development of Arab financial markets;

—To study ways to expand the use of the Arab Dinar as a unit of account and pave the way for the creation of a unified Arab currency.

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b) The Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD)

The purpose of AFESD is to assist in financing economic and social development projects in Arab countries by means of loans granted on easy terms, to governments and to public or private institutions, for financing projects that are vital to the region or for joint projects among Arab countries. It is a regional development bank for the Arab world. It encourages the investment of public and private capital, promotes the development of Arab regional projects, and provides technical assistance in various fields of economic development.*

c) The Arab Bank For Economic Development in Africa (BADEA)

The purpose of BADEA is to co-operate in the economic development of African countries, encourage the flow of Arab capital to Africa and provide the necessary technical assistance. It works closely with the Special Arab Assistance Fund for Africa (SAAFA) which responds to emergency situations in Africa as well as to difficulties caused by the increases in oil prices since 1973. BADEA provided loans to national and regional development finance institutions and to finance foreign exchange components of major agricultural or industrial projects.

It also provides technical and financial aid in identifying economic development projects and acquiring technological know-how.*

d) The Islamic Development Bank (IDB)

The purpose of IDB is to mobilise resources to finance economic and social development of member countries and Muslim communities in accordance with the principles of the Shari'ah. It invests in economic and social infrastructure projects, makes soft loans to private and public sectors, establishes and operates special funds for specific purposes, assists in the promotion of foreign trade and provides technical assistance.*

Thirty four Arab and Muslim countries are members of the IDB which has capital of 2 billion Islamic Dinars (billion SDRs*). Only 45 per cent of its total loans went to Arab countries as of December 31, 1978, mostly to finance infrastructure and public utilities. As of September 1978 the IDB's subscribed capital stood at 757.5 million SDRs.

e) The Arab Investment Company (AIC)

The AIC started its operations in 1975 with an initial capital of \$255 million.

The main objective of the AIC is to promote investment of Arab capital in the economic development of member-states.*

To this end, the AIC encourages and promotes the financing of projects in agriculture, industry, commerce and services.* Its charter empowers it to:

- a) Establish new projects or participate in equity capital in such projects and also purchase, totally or partially, projects already in operation;
- b) Undertake all business operations as may be required to achieve its objectives;

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- c) Place funds in, and borrow directly from financial markets;
- d) Issue bonds and accept time deposits, as may be needed to achieve its purposes;
- e) Undertake any project concerned with minerals, oil or other natural resources;
- f) Construct and purchase real estate;
- g) Provide technical assistance and undertake any necessary study to achieve its objectives.

f) The Inter-Arab Investment Guarantee Corporation (IAIGC)

The main objective of the IAIGC is to encourage the flow of capital, public or private, between Arab countries by providing insurance coverage for Arab investors in the form of reasonable compensation for losses resulting from non-commercial risks — such as nationalization, seizure, expropriation or the introduction of new restrictive regulations and measures affecting the repatriation of capital or transfer of profits by Arab investors. The IAIGC was established through the initiatives of both the Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU) and the Economic Council of the League of Arab States in 1970. In my view, the IAIGC is a prerequisite for the future success of Arab joint ventures and their multiplication.

g) The Arab Fund for Technical Assistance to Arab and African Countries (AFTAAAC)

The Arab Fund of the AFTAAAC co-ordinates and finances technical assistance programs arranged by the League of Arab States and the specialized Arab agencies, prepares surveys of development projects in Arab and African countries, provides consultancy services and experts and organizes their exchange between Arab and African countries.

It is also called upon to co-ordinate scientific and technological development, as well as the development of the means and modes of production between those countries.*

2) Operations of the Most Important Multilateral Financial Assistance Institutions

Most of the Arab multilateral financial institutions use their resources to finance economic and social development projects by means of long-term, low-interest loans. Their object is to improve living standards and promote a more balanced growth of agriculture, industry, housing, employment and education.

In addition to the financing of member countries' specific projects, the funds provide and finance technical assistance for regional development feasibility studies. For illustrative purposes, three of the most important Arab multilateral financial institutions, the AMF, AFESD and BADEA, will be examined here.

The Arab Monetary Fund (AMF)

The operations of the AMF consist of loans to finance overall balance of payments deficits. In deciding on the terms and conditions of its loans, the Bank is required to consider the following factors:

- 1) The financial position of the AMF and the programs it draws upon for its loans and financial activity.

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2) The extent of the need for the loan in the light of the overall deficit in the balance of payments of the particular member country and in the light of its reserves and economic and financial conditions.

3) The ability of the member to repay the loan at the maturity date in accordance with the lending policies of the AMF, as well as its ability to borrow from similar financial institutions and the amounts of the loans it has to repay to these institutions or to the AMF.

4) The volume of the AMF loan to the member country in relation to its paid-up subscriptions.

5) The degree of growth in the economic exchanges of the member country with other Arab countries; and

6) The degree to which the member country has used up its unconditional rights in regional lending institutions of a similar nature.

Furthermore, loans are to be made for a period of not more than seven years and may not exceed twice the amount of the member's paid-up subscription.

The AMF can also provide loans in support of a program designed to cope with a fundamental balance of payments deficit which is structural in nature. Loans are provided at concessionary and uniform rates of interest and charges.

It is worth noting that, due to its very recent establishment, the AMF has not established its rates structure and has yet to make its first loan.*

The Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD)

The fund started its operations in 1973 with a view to giving priority in the allocation of its resources to Mauritania, Somalia, Sudan, People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and Yemen Arab Republic, all of whom were identified by the fund as the least developed nations in the Arab World. These countries were recipients of 40 per cent of AFESD commitments in 1974, but as of 1977 their share only amounted to 26 per cent. The Fund's total loans in 1977 were 221,900 Kuwaiti Dinars (KD) as opposed to 139,500,000 (KD) in 1976. These represent 70 per cent and 64 per cent respectively of the Fund's total liabilities and equities — in other words, of total assets.¹⁰

The sectorial loan distribution by AFESD amounted to 75.9 per cent in infrastructure, 15.4 per cent in manufacturing industry and industry financing and 8.7 per cent in agriculture and agricultural financing. Over the years the sectorial aid distribution of the major Arab funds is as shown in Table II below:

Table II
Sectoral Distribution of Aid
Given by Three Major Arab Funds

	Saudi Arabia*	Kuwait**	Abu-Dhabi***
Transport & Communication	35.1%	32.0%	16.4%
Electricity, water etc.	22.5	28.0	22.8
Mining & Petroleum	—	—	—
Education & Health	16.5	—	—
Industry & Other	18.9	20.0	22.8
Agriculture	7.0	20.0	6.0
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

* For the period 1975-1978

** For the period 1962-1978

*** For the period 1976-1978

Source: Various Arab Funds' Annual Reports

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The cumulative loans commitments to Arab countries from 1973 to the end of 1977 reached 295.3 MKD, while the cumulative disbursements for the same period were 56.5 MKD which represents only about 17 per cent of cumulative commitments. At present the Fund is considering financing 31 projects, including Arab joint ventures.

Out of the cumulative AFESD total commitments, 23 per cent were allocated to Egypt, mainly to finance manufacturing and irrigation projects. 52 per cent of the loan commitments went to four Arab countries; Egypt, Morocco, Sudan and Syria. These countries account for 55 per cent of the population of the Arab World.

In addition to its loan activities, AFESD is working hard on the training of skills which can be used to prepare, analyze and implement investment feasibility studies. AFESD's total technical assistance up to 1977 reached 3.4 million KD and covers 14 regional and sectoral projects.

In its search for a coherent long-term strategy for economic development assistance, AFESD, with the joint participation of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), engaged the University of Wisconsin to prepare a comprehensive study on the economics of the natural resources of the Arab World, with specific reference to pricing, conservation, technological transfers and the impact of generalized preferential treatment.¹⁰

AFESD created a special unit to identify investment opportunities, prepare them in the form of projects, and promote them for investment purposes in the Arab countries. In 1978 this unit prepared 31 investment projects, including joint-Arab multi-national ventures in communications and telecommunications and agricultural projects in the Sudan, with the co-operation of the Arab Organization for Agricultural Investment and Development. The Fund's special unit is responsible for:

- a. the preparation of a list of investment opportunities and the main features of related projects;
- b. providing assistance in the formulation of agreements and related documents and in the acquisition of the technical know-how and qualified staff required to implement new projects;
- c. encouraging capital flows in search of investment opportunities towards member countries with liquid assets.
- d. helping national institutions in charge of development finance.

More than any other Arab multilateral financial institution, AFESD, in co-operation with international and Arab national institutions, the Arab League and the Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU), is actively and continuously seeking to foster closer economic co-operation and integration among Arab countries. The Fund is actively engaged in facilitating the flow of financial resources within the region. Its efforts tend to increase the capacity of Arab member countries to absorb increased investment funds productively.

The Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA)

BADEA's 1979 Annual Report indicates that since 1975 the Bank's operations totalled 203 million U.S. dollars. Out of the cumulative loans of \$203 million that BADEA made from 1975 to 1979, the Bank's sectoral financing distribution appears as follows:

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Sector	Per cent of Total Loans
— Infrastructure & Power	59.73%
— Agriculture	19.84%
— Industry	20.43%
Total	100.00%

BADEA is primarily a development bank and therefore its lending activities are project-oriented, rather than financing balance of payments deficits. Particular attention is given to African projects which are well integrated into defined development plans and programs which foster employment and exports consistent with African social as well as economic development.¹¹

It is worth noting that, following BADEA's request to expand the scope of its loan activities, the Board of Governors decided, during its third annual meeting in Khartoum on December 3, 1977, to merge the 350 million dollars capital of the Special Arab Fund for Africa (SAFA) with the 392.5 million U.S. dollars total of BADEA, thus expanding BADEA's total capital as of 1977 to 742.25 million U.S. dollars.¹²

Most of BADEA's projects are co-financed with the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the African Development Fund and other joint-Arab financing sources.

Thirteen out of a total of 23 African projects have been co-financed by BADEA.

In 1977, Arab co-financing of thirteen African countries amounted to 338.34 million dollars and represented 30.7 per cent of total project costs. Cumulative joint-Arab financing and co-financing of African development projects reached a total of about 3.3 billion U.S. dollars from 1973 to April 1978 and represented 23 per cent of the total costs of Arab co-financed projects in Africa.

BADEA's assistance to African countries is in the form of loans with a high concessional element consisting of a 10-year grace period, a 25-year loan maturity and interest rates ranging from 4 to 6 per cent. The majority of BADEA's loans were made on concessionary terms having a grant element equivalent to 47 per cent.¹³

In planning its aid, BADEA aims to spread its loans over the broadest geographical range possible, while paying special attention to the poorest and least developed countries. The Bank's average loan per country for the period 1975-1977 amounted to \$9.13 million.¹⁴ With regard to project generation and planning, the Bank prepared an inventory of 410 projects in various African economic sectors including 346 national projects, 13 regional ones and 51 dealing with technical co-operation.

The pipeline of these 410 projects that BADEA prepared gives these weightings to the following sectors:

— Infrastructure	34.6%
— Agriculture	28.6%
— Public Utilities	22.7%
— Industry	14.1%
Total	100.00%

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BADEA's officials prepared a medium-term strategy for its lending operations during the 1975-1980 period. According to this plan, BADEA would, by 1980, make cumulative investments of about 1.2 billion dollars or an average of 200 million dollars a year.¹⁵

It should be noted, however, that, while projected loans for 1975, 1976 and 1977 were respectively 85.5 million, 120 million and 250 million dollars, the actual loans and grants for those respective years were only 81.6 million, 62 million and 66.29 million dollars.

3) Resources for Arab Multilateral Financial Assistance

Practically all members of the League of Arab States participated in the capital subscriptions of the major Arab Funds, particularly in the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF); the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD); and the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA). The total authorized capital of Arab multilateral financial institutions is about 10 billion U.S. dollars and the global capital resources of all Arab funds (multilateral, bilateral and special) are approximately 20.0 billion dollars.

The AMF: Twenty Arab states are members of the AMF. This Fund has an authorized capital of 250 million Arab Dinars (AD). The AMF capital stock comprises 5,000 shares each having the value of AD 50.00¹⁶. Algeria and Saudi Arabia are the largest shareholders with subscriptions of AD 38 million each.

Other major subscribers are: Kuwait, Iraq and Egypt with AD 25 million each. The Board of Governors may increase the AMF capital by a special majority decision. In addition, the AMF has to establish a general Reserve Fund.

The AFESD: Twenty one Arab countries are members of this Fund. The agreement establishing AFESD fixed its authorized capital at 800 million Kuwaiti Dinars (KD), or 2.736 billion dollars. The Fund's subscribed capital in 1977 was 370.4 billion KD or about 1.7 billion dollars. The Fund's Basic Agreement document authorized it to obtain supplementary financial resources by issuing bonds or securing loans from public and private Arab institutions and international organisations.

When it started operating in 1974, AFESD planned to undertake operations to an average annual value of 60 million KD.

The BADEA: The agreement establishing BADEA fixed the Bank's capital at 231 million dollars. This amount has been fully subscribed. In addition, following the Arab-African Summit Meeting in Cairo in March 1977 and the Arab Funds Chairmen of the Board meeting in Kuwait in April 1977, a decision was made to consolidate BADEA's accounts with the Special Arab Aid Fund for Africa (SAAFA). The merger resulted in BADEA's expansion of the financial resources available for assistance to 742.25 million dollars.

In addition to strengthening BADEA's capitalisation through the merger with SAAFA, the Bank received commitments in 1977 from four Arab countries (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar) totalling 1.45 billion dollars.

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B) Arab Bilateral Financial Institutions: Objectives and Operations

Arab bilateral aid flows are as significant as multilateral Arab aid. This might be explained by the fact that, for prestige purposes or for closer control, the setting up of Assistance Funds on a national basis is more effective than on a multilateral basis.

There are four major Arab bilateral financial institutions specializing in development assistance to both Arab countries and African and Asian developing countries.

The major objectives and operations of the four funds (the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development; the Abu-Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development; the Saudi Development Bank and the Iraqi Fund for External Development) will be examined below.

The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED)

The KFAED is the oldest and most experienced development assistance fund in the Arab World. It started its operations in 1961 as the main agency of the Government of Kuwait for the provision of loans and technical assistance to Arab countries and has recently extended its development assistance to non-Arab African and Asian countries.

The KFAED's capital was increased manyfold, from an initial capital of KD 50 million in 1961 to KD 1,000 million, or 3.42 billion dollars, in 1977. The Fund's paid-up capital in 1977 was KD 456.3, or 1.55 billion dollars; while its total assets were KD 561.7 million — close to 2 billion dollars.

The Fund's lending in the year 1976-1977 reached KD 114.635 million (about 390 million dollars) to 22 countries. The KFAED's total cumulative loans since its creation in 1961 reached KD 434,995,000 — about 1.5 billion dollars — up to June 1977.

The latest sectoral distribution of the Fund's loans was as follows:

Industry	48%
Transport	28%
Agriculture	24%

Loans to African countries in 1977 reached a total of KD 26,130,000 or about 89 million dollars. It is worth noting that BADEA's loans to African countries in 1977 were only 66.3 million dollars.

In addition to the KFAED's lending activities, the Fund's technical aid in 1977 reached KD 1.2 million or about 4 million dollars, and its cumulative total technical aid since 1961 has reached 44 countries and amounted to KD 5.3 billion or about 18 billion dollars.

Due to its relatively long experience with development aid programs and projects, the KFAED is playing an important role by co-ordinating its activities with the major regional and international financial institutions and technical aid organizations. The Fund, in close co-operation with the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) has embarked on a project to standardize loan procedures, loan insurances and the establishment of lines of credit.¹⁶

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Abu-Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development (ADFAED)

This Fund was established in July 1971 to help Arab, African and Asian developing countries by means of loans, equity participation and technical assistance grants. The ADFAED capital is 72,000 million Dirhams (Dh) or about 500 million dollars.

The Fund's total loan commitments at the end of 1976 reached Dh 1635.8 million — about 410 million dollars — distributed among 42 countries. The largest share of loan commitments (79%) was received by 12 Arab countries with 34 loans amounting to Dh 1,294.6 million or about 323 million dollars.¹⁷

Abu-Dhabi Fund's sectoral distribution of loan commitments by projects in 1977 is as follows:

Project	Number of Loans	% of total	Total Amount in million Dh.
Agriculture	3	20	70.5
Electricity	4	26	160.1
Roads & Railroads	1	7	40.0
Industry	3	20	132.0
Port & Suez Canal Development	3	20	125.9
Telecommunications	1	7	47.0
Total	15	100	575.5

The Fund does not provide program loans and restricts itself to project loans and technical assistance without any preference between national and multi-national projects.

Furthermore, the Fund does not acquire more than 15 per cent of the equity participation in any single project. Direct loans may not exceed 50 per cent of the total cost of any project.

The Saudi Fund for Development (SFD)

The SFD was chartered in September 1974 in Saudi Arabia. It is empowered to participate in lending operations to developing countries in the Middle East, Africa and Asia. Its capital was fixed to 10 billion Saudi Ryals (SR), about 2.84 billion dollars.¹⁸

In 1977 the Fund participated in 33 Arab projects, which represented 51 per cent of its total lending commitments of SR 5.8 billion.

The sectoral and geographic loan distribution of the SFD for the period of July 9, 1975 - June 27, 1976 were as follows:

Distribution by Sector	Percentage	Geographic Distribution	Percentage
Infrastructure	71%	Africa	45%
Agriculture	18%	Asia	52%
Health & Education	11%	Other	3%
Total	100%		100%

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C) Special Arab Financial Assistance Institutions

It is sufficient here to briefly survey the main objectives of these joint financial ventures to reflect their importance as a source of assistance for the economic and social development of Arab countries.

Attempts to collect data on individual or aggregate loans so far made by these institutions has not been possible due to the lack of information available.

Information on Arab joint financial ventures, which have been active in facilitating inter-Arab investments and trade on a commercial banking basis, covers the following six important institutions.

Union des Banques Arabo-Françaises:

This bank has its headquarters in Neuilly in France. It was established on February 26, 1970 with a capital of 110 million French francs. Its objective is to contribute to the financing of foreign trade transactions and of development projects in the Arab countries. The majority holders of the Bank's assets are 15 Arab countries who own 60 per cent of the total shares, followed by Credit Lyonnais with about 32 per cent.

Libyan Arab Foreign Company

This Bank is located in Tripoli in Libya. It was established in 1972 with a capital of 68 million dollars. Its objective is to finance development projects and to promote Libyan investments abroad. The Fund sponsored a Conference in June 1976, attended by six Chairmen of Arab Funds which discussed methods of co-ordinating financial and technical assistance channelled through Arab Funds.

The Iraq Fund for External Development (IFED)

This Fund was established on June 6, 1974 with an initial capital of 160 million dollars. It has a borrowing capacity of twice its total capital. The Fund's objective is to achieve economic integration and development of the Arab countries as well as economic and social development of other developing countries. The IFED's operations comprise:"
a) The provision of medium and long-term concessional loans to development projects in other Arab and developing countries, with priority given to projects vital to the development of the countries concerned;

- b) Participation in development projects, especially those of an investment nature, priority being given to projects which help bring about Arab economic integration.
- c) The encouragement of the investment of public and private capital, directly or indirectly, in development projects.
- d) The provision of technical assistance to developing countries in all fields where problems of economic development arise.
- e) The financing of pre-feasibility and feasibility studies.

So far, the Iraq Fund has not been as active as the previous two Funds.

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The International Arab Bank for External Trade and Development

This Bank has its headquarters in Cairo. It was established in 1973 with a capital of 75 million dollars. The objective of the Bank is to extend assistance to developing countries outside the Arab World. The main shareholders of the Bank are Libya, Kuwait and Egypt.

The Kuwait Investment Company

This investment company has its main offices in Kuwait. It was established in 1961 with a capital of 25 million dollars. Its objective is to invest funds directly in industrial enterprises in Arab countries — specifically in Egypt, Sudan and Syria. The total shareholding of this investment company was equally divided between the Kuwait Government and private Kuwait concerns.

The Arab Investment Company

This investment company is headquartered in Riyadh in Saudi Arabia. It was established in July 1974 with a capital of 206 million dollars. Its objective is to invest Arab funds in agriculture, industry, trade and land and sea transport.

The Arab countries — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Syria, Sudan and Jordan — are participants in this company. Among its major achievements are the co-financing of a 600 million dollar livestock project in Syria, a 180 million dollar sugar project in the Sudan, and a 338 million dollar mining project in Jordan.

The Arab Petroleum Investment Corporation

This corporation is located in El-Dammam, Saudi Arabia. It was established in 1974 with an authorized capital of about one billion dollars.

Its main objective is to evaluate, undertake, finance and implement petroleum and natural gas projects.

The major contributors to this investment corporation are Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates, with 17 per cent of total participation each.

The cumulative initial authorized capital of the above six major Arab financial institutions, whose loans are subject to market conditions, amounts to about 1.4 billion dollars of which one billion is represented by only one financial institution — the Arab Petroleum Investment Corporation.

Conclusion

Arab aid is becoming vital in a world where many of the traditional donors find it more and more difficult to expand or even maintain their previous aid targets.

The multiplicity of Arab institutions for both multilateral and bilateral financial co-operation within and outside the Arab World since 1974, attests to the willingness of the Arab Petroleum Producing and Exporting Countries (APPEC) to play an increasingly vital role in total foreign financial assistance. This role is best reflected through the IMF's offer of a seat to Saudi Arabia on its governing body in 1977 and the latter's large contributions to both the IMF and the World Bank.

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Furthermore, Arab aid, unlike most of the industrialized countries' foreign aid, does not tie in the recipient to buy goods from the donor country for obvious reasons. As a result Arab aid to developing countries generates some indirect benefits to the exports of the industrialized countries.

Since most of the financial assistance made available by Arab funds concentrates on infrastructure, transportation and communication, the funds tend to spread the burden and risk through encouraging consortium loans. As a result, the chances for a developing country to receive a major international loan for a project are enhanced if such a project qualifies for a loan from an Arab Fund.

In order for Arab aid to be more efficient, Arab multilateral and bilateral financial assistance should emphasize the need to mobilise qualified and well-trained Arab technical personnel. Arab technical assistance may capitalize on the existence of Arab skills in the Arab countries and provide the necessary incentives to attract skilled Arabs living and working outside the Arab World.

Footnotes

- ¹ OECD Development Co-operation, 1977, 1978 and 1979.
- ² IMF Survey, March 6, 1978.
- ³ See AFSED Annual Report 1977 (In Arabic) and (Annex 2). Also see Agreement establishing AFSED; UNCTAD; TD/B/609/Add 1, Vol. V, pp. 54-72, August 24, 1976.
- ⁴ See BADEA Annual Reports 1975, 1976. Also see Agreement establishing BADEA, UNCTAD, TD/B/609/Add 1, Vol. V, August 24, 1976, pp. 54-72. The creation of BADEA took place at the Sixth Arab Summit Conference concerning the strengthening of Arab economic, financial and technical co-operation with the African countries and at the nineteenth ordinary session of the Economic Council of the Arab League who adopted resolution 586.
- ⁵ See Agreement establishing the IDB; UNCTAD, TD/B/609/Add. 1 Vol. V.
- ⁶ The original members of the AIC are: Abu-Dhabi, Bahrain, Egypt, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan; later Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, the Syrian Arab Republic and Tunisia acceded.
- ⁷ See Agreement establishing the AIC, UNCTAD, op. cit. pp. 88-105.
- ⁸ See pamphlet prepared for the CAEU's General Secretariat on "Arab Fund for Technical Assistance to African and Arab Countries" 1977, p. 4.
- ⁹ IMF Survey, March 6, 1978.
- ¹⁰ OAPEC, News Bulletin, Vol. 4 No. 2, Kuwait, April 1978, pp. 18-23.
- ¹¹ BADEA's Annual Report, 1977 p. 9 (In Arabic).
- ¹² In March 1977, at the Afro-Arab Summit Meeting; Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States decided to provide 105 million dollars to BADEA's capital.
- ¹³ BADEA's Annual Report, 1977, p. 9.
- ¹⁴ Ibid, p. 9.
- ¹⁵ BADEA's Annual Report, 1975, p. 26.
- ¹⁶ Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries, News Bulletin, Vol. 4, No. 3; in Arabic, p. 26; Kuwait, March 1978.
- ¹⁷ OAPEC, News Bulletin, Vol. 4, No. 5, Kuwait, May 1978, p. 13.
- ¹⁸ OAPEC News Bulletin, Vol. 4, No. 4; Kuwait, April 1978, pp. 23-28.
- ¹⁹ See Law No. 77 issued by the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council, June 6, 1974; Baghdad; Iraq.

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AFGHANISTAN

UK JOURNALIST REPORTS ON AFGHAN EXPERIENCE

PM171516 London THE OBSERVER in English 16 Aug 81 p 10

[Report by Aernout van Lynden: "With the Army Resistance in Kabul"]

[Text] I have just returned from Pakistan, after being smuggled into the Afghan capital of Kabul in an Afghan army jeep. My chauffeur was a regular Afghan Army captain working in league with the Mojahedin rebels.

The adventure began on the third morning after my arrival in the Paghman region, north-west of Kabul, when I awoke in a room filled by what had turned out to be officers of the Afghan Regular Army. Dressed in civilian clothes they had made a 10-mile journey to visit the man whom they called "their commander" who was not in the Afghan Army.

He was a Mojahedin leader called Abdul Haq, whom I had accompanied into Afghanistan a month earlier. Although only 22, he commands well over 200 men in and around Kabul.

The 14 officers, some of them old enough to be his father and all with the rank of captain or higher, listened attentively to his orders.

It was the officers who proposed smuggling me into Kabul. Abdul Haq at first demurred, but the colonel, a small, thick-set man of about 50, was set on it.

It was the only way to get men in, he said. Army vehicles were never stopped, and even if they were, there would always be an officer with him. The only danger was from the house-to-house searches. In the end Abdul acquiesced.

That evening the young commander of the Yunis Khalis faction of Hazb-e-Islami, one of the four main Afghan resistance groups, explained the position of the officers to me.

"Some of them I trust completely. They have even fought alongside us during night attacks on Soviet Army posts. Others have only joined us more recently."

The groups who were to take me into Kabul had come to ask if they could now join the Mojahedin openly. But that was refused.

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"They are of much more use to us within the apparatus of the government." I was told, not so much to provide information about Soviet and Afghan Army troop movements, but also to supply the rebels with ammunition.

A month after the officers' meeting with Abdul Haq, two of them returned to Paghman. All was ready. That night I was to be taken to a house on the outskirts of the capital. Next morning I would be driven into the city.

The journey to the outskirts entailed a three-hour walk, in company with eight Mojahedin. Several times we had to make detours to evade brightly lit up Afghan Army posts but we managed to arrive without detection.

Next morning I was woken early by the officer in whose house I had stayed--a captain in an anti-aircraft unit. He was now in uniform. Gone was his relaxed, welcoming air of the night before. Now he was visibly impatient to get me to my next destination.

We stopped only once--to pick up the colonel--and then raced on. Kabul was only just beginning to stir, traffic was light and there was little to see on the wide boulevards.

In the next six days I made four other journeys round the city in the army jeep. Forced by the denser traffic to drive slowly, I gained a fuller impression.

The capital had a surprisingly full and normal appearance. For example, the big whitewashed carpet bazaar seemed as busy as ever--despite the lack of Western tourists.

Three times we encountered mixed Soviet-Afghan Army checkpoints and each time we were waved through. I noticed that while the Russian soldiers carried arms, the Afghans had none--another sign of the authorities' distrust of anyone who is not a committed member of the People's Democratic Party [PDPA].

Apart from the checkpoints and occasional convoys of armoured personnel carriers, the Russian presence was hardly noticeable in the city. What was obvious, however, was the increase in the population.

Hundreds of party members, knowing themselves to be unsafe in the countryside, have sought refuge there, as have thousands from the villages in a wide area around Kabul --not out of fear for the Mojahedin but rather for fear of Soviet helicopter gunships....

I spent the days hidden in the houses of secretly antigovernment officials, all of whom seemed genuinely pleased to see me. This despite the inherent danger--if I had been caught in their houses they would almost certainly have been sentenced to death. But, as one of them explained: "No journalists ever come to Kabul to report what we are doing."

All the men I stayed with are employed by one or other of the ministries during the day, but when they leave work their energies are directed against the government which pays their salaries.

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Because of the constant threat of house-to-house searches, and the ubiquitous road blocks, these anti-government activities are fraught with difficulty.

"It is 10 times more difficult for us here in Kabul to organise any fundamental actions against the government, than for other Mojahedin outside the city," I was told.

"All we can really do are quick hit-and-run assassinations--and we've been quite successful."

One evening there were three short bursts of submachinegun fire from a few streets away. A few minutes later a Mojahed burst into the rooms to say assassins had shot Fateh Mohammad, a retired general and leading member of the Parchami (ruling) faction of the PDPA.

But who shot him? That still remains unclear, although it seems most likely to have been members of the other Khalq faction of the party.

Although the urban Mojahedin suffer from a shortage of material, their organisation and secrecy are excellent. No group contains more than eight men; all have at least two armed caches at their disposal and no group (even when belonging to the same party) knows of the existence or membership of the other groups. That is known only to their commanders.

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ALGERIA

ANALYSIS OF ALGERIAN POLITICAL INFLUENCES, ORIENTATION

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 230, 10-16 Jul 81 pp 36-37

[Article: "The Algerian Train at the Evian Station between the State Machinery and Party Bets; Chadli Puts Back Loose Joints in Preparation for Drawing up an Integrated Plan of Action"]

[Text] The mechanism of the Evian Agreement, which gave Algeria its independence on 18 March 1962 and **then entered an** era of deep silence for many years, is still interactive within the Algerian ruling establishment after 20 years of independence. The relationship between the party, the state and the army is being considered, and the recent meeting of the Central Committee set out from this fact to reconsider the distribution of strategic choices. This report from Algeria reveals the nature of recent trends.

When the liberation army entered the cities and the front became situated at the head of the institutions of the "modern state"--and these are the Algerian cadres that were established by the administration of the French governor in the last years of the war of liberation--the army found that the Jacques Soustelle machinery had preserved its influence and its effect as an exploitative machine and a tool that was being utilized to serve the higher interests of France.

The imbalance began when the question of who will govern the country was raised: would it be governed by the old administrative structure or by the Liberation Front that came to power with its political struggles?

The debate ended when the Evian Agreement entered the era of silence. However, the problems that had loomed at that time continue, and some of their consequences exist today.

But what did the Evian Agreement lead up to and what were the internal Algerian developments that followed the agreement?

Algerian historian, Dr al-'Arabi al-Zubayri says in this regard, "The French delegation which conducted the Evian negotiations with the delegation of the National Liberation Front had intended to include among the

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statements of the government a number of resolutions. The least that can be said about these resolutions is that they were powerful land mines that were placed on the road leading to the full independence which those who had made the first call for independence in November 1954 had in mind."

The second section of the General Declaration in the Agreement mentioned that "No one may be subjected to police measures or to prosecution by the courts, nor may any regulatory or other penalties be imposed on him because of opinions he expressed on the events that took place in Algeria before the day of the referendum on self-determination or because of actions he committed during the aforementioned events before the cease fire."

It is evident that the primary purpose of this paragraph was to protect two groups of Algerians: older people who had taken part in the secret army organization and had fought alongside the regular French army, and Algerians who had taken up arms against the revolution or cooperated in one way or another with colonialism for the purpose of keeping foreign control.

It may be that what the French delegation had in mind when it included this paragraph in the Agreement is the fact that many of the older people would stay in Algeria to carry the banner of a new kind of colonialism. But the masses whose wounds had not yet healed did not accept this decision, and they accused the leadership of collusion [with the French]. This was tantamount to the first blow to independence after the cease fire.

The Cultural Heritage

The second section of the General Declaration in the Agreement mentions that both France and Algeria can establish an academic and a cultural center in Algeria. Such a center would be open to all those who wished to attend. On the other hand, France was to offer direct aid for the preparation of Algerian technicians.

Thus the French delegation made the delegation of the National Liberation Front itself bless the cultural colonialist policy which was to become an obstacle impeding the establishment of socialism in Algeria.

France knows in advance, and it knows this quite well, that Algeria, which had recently won its independence, could not possibly allow itself to build an academic center outside its territories. And even if it were to do so, such a center would attract expatriates only. The French then had intended this. France, however, had all the capabilities for opening a number of academic and cultural centers where those who had attended French schools during the days of colonialism would be enrolled. Those people are usually sympathetic to French culture.

The fact is that the French cultural center stayed open in Algeria, and French [primary] and secondary schools in the major cities continued to accept the children of high commissioners until 1975. There they studied French programs and were taught by French teachers. It is self-evident that most of those who graduated from these schools, because of their social standing, were to be the cadres of the future.

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In short, Algeria achieved independence with a debt that was estimated to be 3 billion francs, and it accepted France's help in the field of education. This help was restricted to paying the salaries of all those who studied French in Algeria for 3 years. Thus, the French language conquered Algeria after independence. Meanwhile, independent schools were shut down because "the national language was incapable of preparing a technological generation." Consequently, it was only the native language of France that could make the Algerians contemporary. According to this notion an Algerian who insisted on using the Arabic language was considered a counterpart for backwardness and ultraconservatism.

The Negative Dialogue

Thus French heritage was and still is formidable in Algeria, and the struggle in all its forms and methods is going on between two groups:

--The first group includes the fighters of the National Movement, the officers of the Popular National Army, and the Islamic Arab Foundation which believes in change for the purpose of establishing socialism in Algeria.

--The second group includes the bureaucratic cadres that were left by the Jacques Soustelle administration during the period of occupation. After independence this group became the administrative nerve center of the state, having found out how to prepare a whole generation to serve its interests.

The struggle between the two groups has often revolved around Arabization. But the bureaucrats have always known how to use the time factor in their interests, and the Algerian citizen, not knowing the reasons for this delay, continued to wait while indifference and weakness crept into various sectors and public institutions. This led one of the Algerian ministers to say, "Our people want to work. If the sky were to shower them with gold and silver, they would go hungry because they are not working."

This negative dialogue between people at the top and those at the bottom continued. Some of the men in government live in palaces and own millions--it is not evidence that would refute the claim that the people's funds were being embezzled--and workers [meanwhile] suffer from everything. One of the "honest" members of the Political Bureau, who is a "socialist"--there can be no one else--spent 720,000 francs to furnish one of his homes, while the minimum wage in Algeria does not exceed 850 dinars or approximately 1,000 francs, and a kilogram of meat costs 70 francs.

In the midst of these curious and strange intergradations and contradictions university students had something to say. The presidential Arabization decree was issued early in the seventies, and students of the University of Algeria marched in a silent demonstration to show their support for Arabization. But the state machinery confronted the demonstration and used violence to disperse it. Then the agricultural revolution came, and students were divided on it: some supporters worked within the Liberation Front party; there were supporters who would not deal with the party; and

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there was a movement that had reservations on the political choices in general.

In the mid-seventies a comprehensive Arabization program was set down in Algeria, but no progress was made on it. Economic difficulties appeared more than any other time. In the late seventies after the departure of Boumediene the demand for Arabization returned to the forefront, and suddenly, the question of the Berbers [came to the forefront too], presenting the Berber language as an alternative to Arabic. In fact, the Berber question went so far as to demand freedom of speech and called for making the Berber language the national language. This demand was accompanied by two movements in the universities: the religious movement and the Berber movement. Both of these movements were sympathetic to the French language. Opposite them emerged [another] movement: the National Alliance of Algerian Youth and Arabized Students, but those students were a minority on the student scene.

The Cultural Project

Once more these concerns were the subject of in-depth study inside the Central Committee which discussed a statement to this effect. The statement stated, "There is no doubt that the lack of clarity which has surrounded some of our political notions on cultural action has led to some kind of confusion and mystery in setting the priorities for development. Thus it becomes absolutely clear to us that the delay in setting a national policy for cultural action is not so much a delay in time as it is a delay in the maturity of the view of those methods which, when available, would allow the formulation of a comprehensive program under which all the aspects of cultural activity would fall."

The preparatory report on the cultural policy file defines this question with the following clarity: "If the delay in setting this policy has yielded all the negative aspects of the sluggishness that characterizes our cultural life and if it has created the wide gap between supply and demand in the market that produces [our] national culture, it would be a mistake to conclude that setting a national policy in cultural areas will solve all the problems that were produced by development in the country. It would be enough if this policy were to take advantage of the delay that has occurred in setting it down and proceed from the set of economic and social truths that have become clear today as they have never done before. This policy is to use these truths as its principal foundations. This would be the proper beginning in determining a positive notion for our national culture."

The meeting also discussed another working paper presented by the Supreme Arabization Council. That paper affirmed the need to Arabize administrative terms as well as the forms for water, electricity and gas and similar forms which citizens use in their business on a daily basis. It is expected that in 3 years this Arabization will include 60 percent of the state's sectors, provided that the objective be full Arabization.

On the political level the meeting reached the decision to suspend the

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membership of four Central Committee members. They are: al-Tayibi al-'Arabi member of the Revolutionary Council and former minister of agriculture; Ahmed Ben Cherif, member of the Revolutionary Council and former minister of irrigation and construction preparation; Mahmoud Qafaz, the former minister of veterans; and Mustafa Bou 'Arafah director of the National Information Center for Automated Media.

"On the Shelf"

The meeting also reached the decision of putting the membership of numerous Central Committee members "on the shelf." This list has not yet been announced, but those whose names will be on it realize that the change will be swift. It may not be long before a call is made for an emergency convention that would clarify the policy of President Chadli Bendjedid. Three figures are being named as candidates to play prominent roles in the new government. These are: Baki Boualem, Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi and Boualem Benhamouda. The three are the minister of justice, the minister counselor at the presidency and the minister of the interior, respectively.

At the permanent secretariat of the Central Committee Mr Mohamed al-Sharif Musa'idiyah became the chief decision maker. He is considered one of the "strong men" who support President Chadli and who chose the method of "Taking things apart and then putting them back together" in Algerian political life.

It may be that the removal of Abdelaziz Bouteflika, who did not attend the meeting, and of Mohamed Salah Yahyawli from the Political Bureau is an indication of the onset of a tactical "coup" in the balance of power among those who practice Algerian politics. However, despite the sharp critical remarks that are being made against him by some party leaders, Ahmed Abdelghani who has been the prime minister for years stormed into the last meeting of the Political Bureau.

In any case Chadli Bendjedid's bets remain fraught with danger in the face of Islamic groups and the ultra left. It is natural that every step will require much time as one waits for the date of the party congress which will determine the ultimate course of the Algerian train and reconsider the identity of its passengers.

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ISRAEL

'GABRIEL MK 3' SEA-TO-SEA MISSILE

Paris AIR & COSMOS in French 11 Jul 81 pp 37-38

[Text] The Gabriel Mk3 sea-to-sea missile, developed by the MBT [expansion unknown] division of IAI [Israel Aircraft Industries], is a third-generation antiship missile derived from the Gabriel Mk1 and Mk2, in service in the navies of Israel and other countries for several years now. The Gabriel was used for the first time in combat during the Yom Kippur War, in October 1973. It can equip ships of all sizes from a 50-ton patrol craft to a 2,000-ton destroyer. The Gabriel Mk3 is a missile 3.80 meters long, 340 millimeters in diameter and with a wingspread of 1.35 meters. It weighs 560 kilograms, including a 150-kilogram (delayed explosion) warhead. It is equipped with two powder [solid-propellant] motors and an active radar homing guidance head. The missile has a speed of Mach 0.65 and flies skimming the sea by means of a radio altimeter. Its range is 6 to 36 kilometers. The Gabriel Mk3 version differs from the previous versions in the capability of guiding the missile in three modes: missile entirely autonomous guided by the homing guidance head, or redesignation of target in flight by a data-transmission link, or trajectory corrected in accordance with data from the radar of the launching ship. The Gabriel Mk3 weapon system includes the missiles and their launchers (simple or triple), data-processing computers and a console with an alphanumeric PPI display screen making it possible to track 20 targets simultaneously.

Equipment --or reequipment--examples of a fighting ship with the new Israeli weapons. From aft forward, this ship is equipped with the LPH-292 helicopter-carrier ramp, a triple Gabriel Mk3 missile launcher, a Barak surface-to-air missile launcher (on one side), a TCM30 30-millimeter twin mount (on the other side) with Spider 2 fire control, an SRCR short-range decoy launcher, two double Gabriel Mk3 launchers, one triple Gabriel Mk3 launcher, a Barak surface-to-air launcher and a TCM 30 twin mount (on the side opposite to the missile launcher), an EL/M 2200 search radar, an optical director station, an SRCR short-range decoy launcher and a LRCR long-range decoy launcher (on each side) and two 127-millimeter guns. Several foreign navies have already reequipped their old ships with several of these new Israeli weapon systems.

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MAURITANIA

ECONOMIC INDICATORS FOR 1980 SUMMARIZED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French No 1857, 12 Jun 81 p 1589

[Text] The most recent report of economic indicators published by the Central Bank of Mauritania provides figures for the year 1980.

Out of a production of 8.9 million tons of iron ore, comparable to that for the year 1979, exports increased to 8.7 million tons, representing 6.9 billion ouguiya (+ 0.9 billion). The main purchasers of Mauritanian ore were France (2.7 million tons), Italy (2.1 million tons), Belgium (1 million), Japan (1 million), the FRG (0.6 million), Spain (0.5 million), Great Britain (0.4 million) and Romania (0.2 million). In 1980, 12,200 tons of gypsum were exported (as compared to 16,100 tons in the preceding year).

Fish exports came to 77,100 tons, a substantial increase over 1979 when the total only came to 14,600 tons. More than 80 percent of the shipments were made up of fresh and frozen fish, with mollusks and crustaceans accounting for 3,250 tons. Fish meal accounted for 8,800 tons and fish oil for 750 tons. The value of fish exports came to 2 billion ouguiya (0.6 million in 1979).

Foreign trade, in terms of adjusted figures, came to the following for the years 1979 and 1980:

	1979	1980
Imports CIF	12,220	13,119
Exports FOB	7,042	8,527
Deficit	5,178	4,592

For the month of January 1981, imports came to 0.9 billion ouguiya and exports to 0.4 billion.

France remained the leading trade partner of Mauritania in 1980, with shipments totaling 4.1 billion ouguiya and purchases totaling 2.3 billion. The other EEC member countries ranked second (shipments totaling 4.3 billion and purchases totaling 2.1 billion). The figures for Spain were 0.7 million and 1 billion ouguiya. Among the African countries, Senegal accounted for shipments worth 1.5 billion ouguiya.

Consumer goods led the list of imports for the year 1980 (6.1 billion ouguiya). Transportation equipment accounted for 1.3 billion and fuels for a total of 1.6 billion ouguiya.

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A total of 206,300 tons of goods were unloaded and 3,400 tons loaded at the Nouakchott wharf in 1980. The autonomous port of Nouadhibou unloaded 69,200 tons of goods and loaded 44,200 tons, including 23,300 tons of fish.

The turnover total for the six most representative industrial enterprises increased to 210 million ouguiya in 1980 (+ 11 percent over 1979). As to the five most important public works enterprises, the value of the work carried out in 1980 came to 621 million ouguiya (+ 6 percent).

At the end of 1980, the price index for family consumption of the European type in Nouakchott stood at 173.4 (on a base of 100 established in January 1975), as compared to 156.1 a year earlier. At the end of January 1981, this index showed a substantial increase to 197.4.

As of 31 December 1980, the total currency in circulation came to 7.1 billion ouguiya (+ 1.2 billion over the end of 1979), including 2.4 billion in certificates and coins in circulation and 4.7 billion in sight and term bank deposits (+ 1.2 billion).

On the other hand, the total of loans to the economy came to 10.1 billion ouguiya (+ 1.1 billion over the end of 1979) and claims against the Mauritanian treasury came to 1.6 billion (+ 0.2 billion).

Also at the end of December 1980, the net foreign assets provision was reflected by indebtedness in exchange value totaling 1.4 billion ouguiya (as compared to a position, also negative, of - 1.6 billion a year earlier).

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MOROCCO

CAUSES OF JUNE RIOTS FOUND IN ECONOMY, INFLATION, IMF IMPOSITIONS

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 81, 3-9 Jul 81 pp 52-53

[Article: "Will Economic Situation Deny Morocco Fruits of Military Victory; Look for International Monetary Fund Behind Casablanca Incidents"]

[Text] War conditions worked with the drought, the rise in prices of imported oil, inflation and the austerity conditions required by the loan advanced by the International Monetary Fund to prepare the stage for the recent riots in Casablanca. Here is a report on the economic background of these incidents.

It seems that the improving Moroccan military position is inversely proportionate to the country's economic situation and standard of living. This is an acknowledged fact, especially since the war costs the Moroccans \$1.5 million daily.

It also seems that the Moroccans, who have been more heavily hurt by economic conditions and the standard of living, are no longer capable of patience and of waiting to reap the fruits of victory in the military battle that is drawing to a close in favor of Morocco. This is what has motivated King Hassan II to urge Moroccans to endure a little, pointing out that the recent Casablanca incidents may affect the country's negotiating position.

The immediate cause of the incidents was a rise in the price of some basic food supplies last May by rates of from 20 to 30 percent.

This measure led to a chain of angry reactions among the rank and file of the opposition parties. The government felt the reactions and resorted to reducing the price increases by rates amounting to 50 percent.

But the opposition and the labor federations affiliated with it demanded abolition of the entire increase in prices and an increase in the wages of workers and employees, saying that the latest increase in prices signaled a deterioration of the Moroccan citizen's purchasing power.

In view of the fact that the government could not back down on the increase due to the critical economic situation, the opposition staged a labor strike on Saturday (20 June) that quickly turned into riots taking the form of attacks on public property, clashes with the security forces and a toll of victims from both sides.

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Internal political conditions cannot be separated from the purely economic causes that led to this hot confrontation on the occasion of the imminent end of the latest parliamentary session. The government favors extending the term of the present Chamber of Deputies because of current conditions whereas the opposition, especially the Socialist Union of the People's Forces, prefers new elections from which a parliament more representative of the popular will may emanate.

International Monetary Fund's Conditions

There are numerous indirect reasons for the latest incidents. It seems that the increase in prices came in response to the austerity conditions advised by the IMF in return for the loan it advanced to Morocco last October amounting to \$1 billion.

The purpose of the loan was to enable Morocco to balance its balance of payments, considering that the mathematical deficit amounted to 6 billion dirhams (\$1.6 billion) at the end of last year and the foreign debt amounted to nearly \$7 billion.

Even though the IMF has given Morocco loan-repayment provisions extending to 1993, it asked Morocco to introduce tax reform, to reduce social services and to reduce the government subsidy for foodstuffs.

The Moroccan government hesitated strongly in responding to these demands because it realized from the outset the extent of their negative impact on the working and popular sectors. Suffice it to point out here that the treasury shoulders one-third the price of a loaf of bread.

But the war has been going on since 1974 and the need to bolster and strengthen the armed forces' fighting capabilities has compelled the government to devote 20-25 percent of the budget for defense. This means new taxes must be levied some social, educational and housing services must be reduced.

Arab aid, estimated at \$1 billion annually, has contributed to strengthening the budget and meeting the burdens of the costs of armament. This aid is advanced basically by Saudi Arabia, Iraq and other Gulf countries.

There are other factors, for which the government is not responsible, that have helped intensify economic and living conditions. At a time when price of phosphate, the main export item, has fallen, the price of imported oil has risen and has come to consume the value of all of Morocco's phosphate exports. Here it must be pointed out that the figures of the Moroccan oil bill amounted to nearly \$1 billion last year.

Here also, a quick review must be made of the development plans, or the "resolution" plans, as they are called in Morocco. The 1973-77 5-year plan was characterized by expansion in spending on development and construction projects.

But the war conditions and the setback in phosphate prices in world markets, and then the huge rise in oil prices, dealt painful blows to the process of implementing this development plan.

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This is why Morocco was forced to draw up a 3-year austerity plan (1978-80) that was geared fundamentally toward squeezing spending and focusing on completing the unimplemented projects of the previous plan.

This austerity plan did actually succeed in saving sums of hard currency for which Morocco was in the direst need. But at the same time, the plan led to a freeze in the economic growth that has been reflected basically in a halt to economic and industrial expansion and in the rise of unemployment to levels unknown to Morocco since its independence. This explains the reasons for the protests against the latest increase in prices.

The current (1981-85) 5-year development plan seeks to revitalize economic growth and focus main attention on the agricultural sector, especially irrigation projects such as the construction of dams and effective use of Morocco's wasted water capabilities. Morocco suffered from drought in the last agricultural season.

In the field of improving agriculture, Morocco must devote major attention to the cultivation of grains so as to curtail foreign grain imports. It must then face the problem of the sharp Spanish competition for Moroccan agricultural products that used to be channeled to the European market.

The new 5-year development plan also devotes considerable attention to projects for developing sea fishing. Morocco possesses enormous resources in this regard because its Atlantic shores attract foreign fishing fleets. This has led Morocco to more than one dispute with other states whose fishing fleets have been violating Moroccan waters.

Moroccan officials estimate that the value of the revenues that Morocco loses as a result of foreign fishing in its waters, and as a result of the smuggling of some of the Moroccan production to France and Spain, at nearly \$1 billion annually.

The third project to which the current development plan devotes attention is that of relying on nuclear energy to generate electricity so as to reduce reliance on oil. Morocco possesses an enormous reserve of uranium fit for use as fuel in the power plants that will be completed in the early 1990's.

The war conditions have colluded with the drought conditions, with rising inflation and with oil prices to create the causes that helped spark the latest riots in Casablanca.

Through its strict security measures, the government has been able to reestablish stability. But it seems that a search must be made for speedy economic solutions and solutions and solutions to problems of living conditions in order to calm social tension.

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MOROCCO

REPORT ON MOROCCAN LABOR FEDERATION

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 230, 10-16 Jul 81 pp 32-35

[Article by Fu'ad Abu Mansur: "The File on Moroccan Labor Unions: the Moroccan Labor Federation: a Polarization of Demands That Is Wary of Political Subordination"]

[Text] Mahjoub Ben Seddik: "We are the vanguard of the people, and our choice is the difficult road."

The Casablanca events ended peacefully, but their social and political repercussions continue. So far, defense of the Sahara has had priority in Moroccan spending, but the recent explosion of violence may force the government to reconsider the order of priorities so it can establish a greater balance between military spending and social spending. AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI opened the file on Moroccan labor unions in an attempt to understand the historical and ideological roots of the problem. After meeting the General Federation of Labor (Issue No 229, 3 July 1981) we meet with the leaders of the Moroccan Labor Federation [UMT] which is pursuing a struggle to realize demands whose principal feature may be its wariness of politics.

The building of the Moroccan Labor Federation [UMT] stands in the middle of al-Jaysh al-Malaki [Royal Army] Street in Casablanca. It is a tall building, 10 stories high. People who enter the building notice that it is bustling with unabated activity. This was especially true in the period that witnessed the tug-of-war process between the unions and the government, a period whose peak was reached in the clashes of last 20 June. Officials of the sectors and chapters of the federation are intent on preparing mobilization and guidance files for the purpose of "lining up the largest possible number of labor union members around the underlying assumptions of the federation to strengthen its labor participation and to take over the vital demands of the Moroccan toiling classes."

The terminology of labor union members in the Moroccan Labor Federation does not go beyond the jargon that is commonly heard on the Moroccan labor scene. And this makes the various organizations draw from one source of conduct despite the ideological differences that remain signs for

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intellectual pride, registering positions in the ring of internal competition. On the daily and practical level, however, positions and opinions are channeled into one policy of demands whose objective for some is to obtain an easy loaf of bread. For others, that objective is to carry out a national action through labor organizing.

Circles of the Moroccan Labor Federation are eager to say that their labor union battle has special characteristics in word and deed, the inspiration for which comes from the heritage of struggle that has accrued to federation members because of historical antecedence and the integration of demands and ideologies. This claim harbors a large measure of assumptions and may not turn out to be true in all the positions and appearances of the federation.

And here we ask the secretary general of the Moroccan Labor Federation, Majhoub Ben Seddik, who has held his position since the mid fifties, "What did you do for the Moroccan working class outside the framework of very flowery slogans in the developing countries? Is there a Moroccan labor union personality who knows what he wants in the midst of the socio-economic innovations other than to ask that [the task of] earning one's daily bread be made easier? This is important, of course, but it is not the ultimate prospect in the continuing national battle."

There is no doubt that the cadres of the Moroccan Labor Federation are organized and effective. And here we do not deny the effort this action must have required in the midst of a labor environment wherein conflicts and problems abound. There is also no doubt about the rallying power of the Moroccan Labor Federation and the discipline of its members. One visit to the federation's principal headquarters in Casablanca is sufficient to establish the commitment of federation members to labor and the integration of their views with the socio-economic rhythm in the country. Here, for example, a visitor may find a large and documented file on the growth and development of the working class in the Arab homeland along with careful studies of union conditions in Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, the Arabian Gulf and North and South Yemen. The visitor may also find preliminary statistics of labor organizations and figures about future possibilities. In addition, there is a wealth of information about labor conditions in the organization of socialist countries.

Those who are familiar with the nature of Moroccan labor union activity say that the Casablanca events tested the Moroccan Labor Federation [UMT], which is the largest labor organization in Morocco. Sometimes the Moroccan Labor Federation finds itself compelled to go along with the Democratic Confederation of Labor [CDT], a young organization with a dynamic presence and a distinctive ability for mobilizing workers. The "going along" process sometimes becomes a process of persuasion, especially when circles of the confederation declare that the battle [that is being fought] is that of Moroccan workers regardless of their union affiliations. In the view of officials of the UMT this means that Moroccan labor union leaders are quickly burned out because any important demonstration of universal implications remains "a bag of unpleasant surprises" in the shadow of conflicting

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directions and the lack of agreement on common demands in the midst of inconsistent efforts. The Casablanca clashes did affirm the truth of UMT's apprehensions, when workers opened fire on each other on the pages of newspapers first and then in the field. The newspapers of the Istiqlal party did not hesitate, for example, in alluding to "detering the criminals who create havoc in national structures and accomplishments."

Deadly Love

While the Moroccan trade unions are engaged in hanging their dirty laundry in public, the Moroccan Labor Federation, according to its circles, is trying to wash its hands of the consequences of the "deadly love" [that has grown] between the government and the confederation of Houbair Al-Amaoui. These circles attribute the "positive neutrality" to the need to respect history and ideology and to the fact that the stage of "hand wringing" in the trade union battle against misery, backwardness and ignorance has not been reached.

For the Moroccan Labor Federation history begins in 1955 when Moroccan nationalists established an economic and a social association between political emancipation and liberation from foreign subordination. This emphasizes the fact that the federation represents the concrete form of a heritage of struggle which it does not want to squander in fleeting practices. The federation had grown as an organization defending the limited demands of the Moroccan working class and taking part in the struggle to uproot foreign exploitation. Hence the need for cohesion between the federation and the National Liberation Movement was underscored. In the fifties this movement was represented by the Istiqlal party, the Resistance group, and the Moroccan Liberation army.

This cohesion bolstered the Moroccan Labor Federation with a large number of workers who joined it. With the return of King Mohamed V from his exile, the Moroccan Labor Federation's organizations began to become integrated and to gain strength. Thus, in a few months no less than 15 federations were established in addition to the Railroads Local that was established before Morocco's independence. Ever since that day the Moroccan Labor Federation's mode of struggle has crystallized around the points of genuine democratic practices for the country, radical agrarian reform, an administrative purge of the "strongholds" of colonialism and the elimination of foreign bases. We can summarize the principal organizational features of the Moroccan Labor Federation as follows:

--National figures in the labor union hierarchy, such as Ouarzazi and al-Jabali are to be brought to the forefront.

--Labor union organizational ties continued within the Independence party through the Parliament from which a national committee that included Abderrahman Youssoufi, Abdallah Ibrahim, Abderrahim Bouabid, Mahjoub Ben Seddik and Mehdi Ben Barka had developed.

--The federation benefited from the resistance movement and the liberation

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army; it stood on its feet in the Moroccan desert and organized peasants, farmers and mine workers in the areas of the south. This alliance led to the acquisition of significant gains for the labor union movement in the areas of organization and demands. The 1957 law [was enacted], recognizing the right of Moroccan workers to form a union, but denying foreign workers that right. This was followed by the appearances in 1957 and 1959 of decrees (laws in current Moroccan usage) to emphasize collective agreements on social security and on an adjustable scale for prices and wages.

--The programmed presence of labor union action then began when the Moroccan Labor Federation began to act. It had tried to form the first united federation in 1958 that would include all civil service federations. At that time federation officials commanded universal national respect. They took part in the delegations that represented Morocco at the United Nations, and they defended the questions of Algeria and Palestine.

But the labor union honeymoon did not last long for the Moroccan Labor Federation. There were furtive attempts to divide the labor union movement and to form counter labor unions, such as the General Federation of Labor [UGT], which was formed in 1960. (See the previous issue of AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI No 229). But the representative power of the federation remained considerable. The strike of 20 March 1960 which had been planned to disturb the birth of the UGT attests to that.

The Teeth of the Saw

At this turning point the Moroccan Labor Federation experienced a development that was rough. The tie between it and the National Liberation Movement had waned, and this deprived it of some of its glitter on the labor scene. Also the fact that it confined itself to making demands subjected it to the pitfalls of trade union conflicts. This became evident in the call to strike that it announced in 1961 to achieve a series of demands among which were [the following]: an increase in wages, recognition of employees' rights to strike and freedom for the Supreme Council for Public Employment to hold meetings. There is no doubt that the Moroccan Labor Federation benefited considerably from the arrival of Abdallah Ibrahim to the office of prime minister in the late fifties, at least as far as labor credibility was concerned. But federation circles preserved the leftist heritage after the father of Morocco's left disappeared into the sunset and the lovers became separated from the National Union of People's Forces [UNFP] and joined the organization of Abderrahim Bouabid.

The federation suffered an internal structural jolt, especially following the turmoil that had accompanied the strike of 19 June 1961 and the shock which this had created in the ranks of the postal unions and the unions of water and electricity distribution [workers]. These unions reaped nothing but empty promises. As a result an active movement emerged within the National Movement seeking to call to account the labor union leadership that had retracted its "just demands." We can go back to the figures that are cited by Moroccan researcher Abdellatif El Menouni in his book, "The

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Labor Union Movement in Morocco"--the book is in French--to confirm the decline of the labor union's prestige in the ranks of the Moroccan Labor Federation and to go on further into the period of "catching our breaths."

--In 1957 we find 600,000 members.

--In 1959 we find about 650,000 members.

--In 1960 the ticker tape stops at 600,000.

--In 1963 the figure declines to 400,000.

--In 1965 there is a decline in the neighborhood of 200,000.

--In 1975 there is no change; [the figure remains] in the neighborhood of 200,000.

Mahjoub Ben Seddik corrects [these claims] and affirms that recent years have seen a jump in the figures of about 700,000 members. The public relations official in the federation gave me the magazine, AL-'UMMAL AL-'ARAB [Arab Workers] which is published in Damascus, and he told me with pride, "We are the largest and the most organized labor organization in Morocco. We are represented by 20 delegates to the General Federation of Arab Workers, and this is an indication of our active ability to mobilize."

Beyond circumstantial allegations we notice today that the Moroccan Labor Federation has lost some of the glitter that used to distinguish it in the fifties and early sixties. There are several reasons behind this decline. Among them is the methodical fragmentation that befell the structure of the labor union and the emergence of the General Federation of Workers [UGT] and the Democratic Confederation of Labor [CDT] which took away from the Moroccan Labor Federation a large number of members and followers. Furthermore, the federation's insistence on the "bread policy," which relies on limited strikes and movement devoid of basic political motives, caused the "Federation" to enter into a sphere of "peaceful resignation" with regard to purposeful labor-union action, especially since some interference by leadership was, at times, explained as having as its objective the neutralization of the Moroccan working class in order to contain it politically and socially. This is the gap through which the Democratic Confederation of Labor crept in to establish its existence on the labor scene and to politicize sectors of employees, civil servants, professionals and intellectuals. Its authority figures found fault with the federation's implicit retreat from coordination, solidarity and expansion of the struggle, restoring to people's minds the decline of federation chapters such as the chapter of mines, fuel, textiles, flour mills and sugar. These chapters had played a principal role in establishing the labor union movement before a segment of them was taken in by the new labor unions. The figures of the General Federation of Workers [UGT] also find fault with the Moroccan Labor Federation for the absence of democracy from its ranks and for the fact that it has slipped into a maze of red tape with fragile ties

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to labor units that have narrow bases. "Although this situation," adds the colleagues of Abderrazzaq Afilal, "has given labor union bureaucracy teeth in recent years and has enabled it to maneuver, to monitor organizations and to proceed with the plan to weaken democracy, this situation has also caused the federation to lose its strong position and decision making power on the national scale. It has forced it to make concessions to employers and commercial cartels.

The secretary general of the Democratic Confederation of Labor, Noubair Mohamed Al-Amaoui says, "The Moroccan Labor Federation has lost its stature as the representative of the Moroccan working class because of the mystique that surrounds its practical positions, far beyond the slogans and the recording of major intellectual signs. Federation circles say that this waning phenomenon has struck their presence in the private sector. Superficial labor union organizations, whose purpose is to muddle labor union activity, have infiltrated some institutions and obtained important representative powers. These circles mention specifically The Mineral Prospecting and Investment Office, the Filroc Textile Mill, and the Sahel flour mills. This phenomenon has even forced itself upon those who for several years have sung the praises of the broad influence which the Moroccan Labor Federation has had within the Moroccan working class. This is because the policy of preserving the worker's bread was unable to achieve this simple goal. Abderrahman Lahrichi from the Executive Office of the General Federation of Workers comments on this failure, emphasizing the gap that exists between the labor union struggle and the political struggle. It was this gap that was behind the loss of a significant number of labor union gains that had resulted from a general national and progressive struggle against colonialism. It is evident that the Moroccan people had persevered on this road within streamlined popular organizations.

Political Retreat

What is to be borne in mind here is the fact that the circles of the General Federation of Workers and of the Democratic Confederation of Labor agree that despite the deadly love that exists between them, the retreat of the Moroccan Labor Federation, one of Morocco's historical organizations, is due to the fact that its programs lack the political dimension of a labor union battle. The General Federation of Workers is fighting under the banners of the Independence party and is calling for social equality. The confederation of Noubair Mohamed Al-Amaoui believes in a Marxist-Leninist oriented scientific socialism, and it works amidst the toilers and intellectuals. Meanwhile, the Moroccan Labor Federation covers its programs with ambiguous slogans it derives from the underlying assumptions of the National Union of People's Forces, a political organization that had an extended honeymoon in the sixties prior to its present-day decline and reduction to symbols whose time may have gone forever.

Does the Moroccan Labor Federation suffer from the loss of a contemporary perspective? Is it relying only on the intelligentsia which is leading the workers in their labor union battle? Mahjoub Ben Seddik, a prominent

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labor union figure in Morocco, says that the federation spurned the organizations that tried to turn away from its principal assumptions. He said that the real revolution was that which reconciled desire and capability. Reports that have been endorsed by successive federation congresses focused on principal lines that crystallize "the genius and historical characteristics of the Moroccan working class." Mahjoub Ben Seddik goes on to say, "Ever since we came into existence, we have preferred taking the difficult road. [We do so] for the sake of true liberation, away from all [forms of] subordination. Our aim is to establish working democratic institutions that would transfer wealth from the hands of the fortunate few to the broad masses of the people. Our commitments presume the continuation of the struggle and major sacrifices, especially since a deep crisis and an acute sense of having fallen into a critical predicament are prevailing over national life. The horizons are dim, and political life is a sham. [The search goes on for] a new spirit amidst the "democratic series" that has become like the foam on the sea waves."

The secretary general of the Moroccan Labor Federation goes on to say, "We do not change our opinions the same way we change our clothes. Our fundamental convictions affirm that Moroccan workers have no choice but to continue to struggle. They want to persuade us to accept the current situation, and their argument stems from the reality of opportunists. But we refuse to be persuaded since we are convinced that there is a brighter alternative which would take into consideration the people's choices and the road of liberation."

Firm Convictions

In this regard the secretary general emphasizes the convictions that underlie his labor union battle and says, "It behooves us to furnish the conditions for success because we are the vanguard of the popular masses. On the basis of the resolutions of our sixth conference we have to pay more attention to molding [our] young people and teaching them to bear responsibilities. We were delighted with the unity of vision that became evident in the last conference of the International Federation of Arab Labor Unions. We are also calling for furthering [our] solidarity with the Palestinian people under the leadership of the liberation organization so that the Arabs can regain their full national rights. This does not preclude the fact that our basic slogan in both domestic and foreign action is to continue the struggle for the purpose of [achieving] the change that revolves around the following assumptions:

--"The absence of any permanent conflict between the interests of the various toiling masses.

--"The need to be free of narrow biases so that efforts can be channeled into one demand this includes the right to work, the elimination of unemployment, the increase of wages and social security, the distribution of the country's wealth fairly in a manner that respects human rights, and the reinforcement of the democratic system."

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Concerning the recent [price] increases that affected basic consumer goods Mahjoub Ben Seddik says, "They are dreadful." He is asking that these prices be rolled back because the justifications that were offered by officials for these price increases constitute in themselves an admission of the fact that current economic choices have failed. He affirms that "achieving radical changes in the status of Moroccan workers requires a thorough reconsideration of economic, social and political structures in that context. Circumstantial labor union demands appear to be a sign on the road of universal liberation whose requirements have not yet been completed."

Mahjoub Ben Seddik summarizes the characteristics of "universal liberation" in the following channels of struggle:

1. Liberation is the revolution that leads to radical changes in the economic, political and social machinery.
2. The new colonialism wears kidskin gloves so as to put an end to the mode of economic subordination. It makes the poor poorer and the rich richer. In addition, it forms a so-called select class that monopolizes cultural, social and economic excellence.
3. In this regard the vital national forces break into splinter groups, and [their] theories and individual interpretations contradict each other while the privileges of a fortunate minority that benefits from a superficially democratic climate are reinforced.
4. The multiplicity of political parties and labor unions can only lead into two directions: subordination or liberation. This classification, narrow as it is, yields no more than a class of opportunists who masquerade as false prophets. Hence, there are two modes of labor union morality: affiliation with the existing regime or rebellion. Workers must rebel so they can tear down the machinery of exploitation and breathe freely.
5. The need to plunge into the political battle within the conditions of the organization and to agree on a method for analyzing and determining the various objectives so as to overthrow the feudal and capitalist structures.
6. The Moroccan working class is the revolutionary means for achieving socialism and changing production relationships. If this objective is difficult, it is so because the Moroccan National Movement is characterized by hesitation and ideological gaps. This has forced the bourgeoisie to conspire against the Moroccan Labor Federation. The principal factors around which the ideological struggle with the Moroccan Labor Federation revolves seek to create doubts about the effectiveness of the national working class. Those factors seek to place insubordination in their scheme of things to change economic and social equations in Morocco in their favor.
7. Those who accept the principle of conflict in interests--such as Marxists, for example--refuse to acknowledge its historical role as a

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motivating force for revolutionary change. Then they give themselves the role of impartial and fair arbiter among the exploited. Very simply they deny the fact that factors of change lie within history and not outside it. There is a third class among the members of the petty bourgeoisie that wants to place itself to the left of the working class. These people want to make themselves, according to circumstances, more toiling than the toilers and more revolutionary than the revolutionaries. They are tacticians without a strategy, and they consider themselves the enemies of the Moroccan working class.

Mahjoub Ben Seddik concludes his analysis by saying, "Full equality among revolutionaries does not require one to certify that one is an atheist. Revolution cannot come about by distorting the personality of the revolutionary fighter and removing him from his environment. The Moroccan evolves in an Islamic, Arab, national environment. He derives the strength of his character from that environment. This means that the values of Moroccan society are exploding continuously under the pressure of that society's conflicts. But the Moroccan working class, with its strategic position in society, is being invited to occupy a prominent sphere in the course of the organized and responsible revolutionary struggle to build a progressive national society that enjoys prosperity and freedom.

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MOROCCO

REPORT ON DEMOCRATIC CONFEDERATION OF LABOR

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 231, 17-23 Jul 81 pp 34-35

[Article by Fu'ad Abu Mansur: "The File on Moroccan Labor Unions: Democratic Confederation of Labor Is Ideologically Quixotic, a Hodgepodge of Explosive Content"]

[Text] Noubair Mohamed Al-Amaoui says, "We prefer using a scalpel rather than cold fingers."

About 1 month after the Casablanca events the conviction is growing that those events were the first political and ideological "foul play" executed by the labor unions. Confederation members, the followers of Noubair Mohamed Al-Amaoui, who had sparked the events did more likely practice some sort of labor union quixotism to win over some of the bases. The outcome of that is well-known.

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI concludes this file with those with whom it had begun it: the Democratic Confederation of Labor [CDT]. The magazine's purpose, now that the wounds have been alleviated, is to ask [the following] question: What is the reason behind the labor union fragmentation in Morocco, and why are labor efforts exploited for non-labor union objectives? Then, [the magazine asks], what lies beyond the horizon?

Members of the Democratic Confederation of Labor are trying to set themselves up as a new alternative to the Moroccan Labor organizations that, according to their sources, have proven their failure to change the equation which states that, "It is only the gloom of night that is the empire of the poor. Ever since Morocco ceased to be a protectorate, the world of light and brightness has belonged to those who are materially fortunate and to those who move around in their spheres."

Speaking figuratively, confederation members go on to say, "Among the serio-comic contradictions [in Morocco] is the fact that the black color of labor has always been centered in the city, which Spanish poet, Emilio Rodriguez has described as "a forest in the canyon." This city, that is, Casablanca, is the city of the proletariat, the barometer of social and economic conditions. This barometer has always forecast cloudy skies and storms, as was

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the case last 20 June. This is the equation that is based on class and continues to push those on the higher rungs of the ladder even higher and those who are on the lower rungs further down.

This very specific evaluation of the Democratic Confederation of Labor [CDT], as Moroccan economic circles told AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, suffers from narrowness and superficiality. Moroccan liberalism sometimes produces satisfactory phenomena, as is the case in many countries that have a free economy. But the official "view" then interferes and restores the game to its proper channels. There are various examples of the war the national government is waging against "the sponges" that are trying to soak up the potential for prosperity.

At any rate, the same economic circles go on to say, "Why don't confederation members and those who back them formulate integrated economic alternatives? Why don't they propose through their representatives in parliament programmed scientific plans to contain the effects of inflation and what they call "the poverty spiral" instead of resorting to demagoguery and revolutionary oneupmanships?"

The Verbal War

If the Democratic Confederation of Labor were a new labor union school in Morocco, as labor union circles claim it is, it did in return introduce into the language of labor a violent dialectic tone to which the Moroccan scene has not been accustomed. It would be enough to take a look at its weekly [publication], AL-DIMUQRATIYAH AL-'UMMALIYAH, which has not come out in some time because of a financial deficit, or to skim the editorials of AL-MUHARRIR to ascertain the verbal war that is being waged against the government's programs and its economic and social choices.

There is no doubt that the "Confederation of Noubair Mohamed Al Amaoui is making use of dynamic organizing on the labor scene, thus exceeding the classicism of the organizing action of its two archrivals, the Moroccan Labor Federation and the General Federation of Workers. Sources of the two unions have acknowledged the "flexibility" of the confederation's [ability] to polarize people, emphasizing the fact that the confederation was organized recently--it was established on 26 November 1978. In a period of 3 years the confederation was able to establish a significant presence in the phosphates, public health, postal service, water, electricity, oil, gas and education sectors. "But this presence," officials of the Moroccan Labor Federation say to set the record straight, "lacks a realistic sense and a vision of struggle. Confederation members want to 'twist the arms' of the other labor unions that are competing with them. Sometimes they resort to foul play in their organizing action that is based on destroying what has been accomplished so far. Was there a foul play more 'foul' than the events of last 20 June which violated the simplest rules of democracy and liberalism?"

Charges and counter-charges affirm that there are many holes in the Moroccan labor union umbrella. The holes sometimes turn into large slashes,

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especially when labor union action is tested by labor demands or by national demands. Moroccan labor union members who oppose the assumptions and practices of the Democratic Confederation of Labor--and they have numerous opinions and ideas that even contradict each other--agree that the organization of Noubair Mohamed al-Amaoui has been the victim of the extremist slogans that he articulated 2 years ago. He had tried to take advantage of the failures of a group of workers and to mobilize them into erroneous directions, taking advantage of the democratic climate in the country. He also tried, according to the same labor union sources, to apply the principle of "the magic wand" to change the structure of an economy that is rooted in Moroccan reality and subject to domestic and foreign enticements.

We find some satisfaction in the critical remarks that are being hurled by Moroccan labor union members against their colleagues in the confederation. It were as though they had waited for Al-Amaoui and his followers at the turn of the road to watch him being torn to pieces. Even circles of the Party of Socialism and Progress [PPS] under the leadership of Ali Ya'tah, who had clearly affirmed their solidarity with the confederation's steps on the pages of AL-BAYAN newspaper, leaned towards criticizing the irresponsibility that accompanied the Casablanca events. It were as though Ali Ya'tah himself had wanted to join the ranks of the General Federation of Workers to watch the process of confederation members being torn to pieces. The government had held them responsible for the riotous actions and for inciting chaos.

The Critical Turning Point

Behind the critical nature of this turning point hides the essential truth which analyzes the various aspects of Moroccan labor union action: violence or negotiations. It is obvious that the Democratic Confederation of Labor preferred taking the first course. This is evident in numerous petitions and positions it adopted despite the reservations of a large part of its labor membership. However, well-informed Moroccan sources told AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI that this part of the labor membership held only a limited number of the strings that led to the events of 20 June, and it was this that forced the government to investigate the secrets behind the events and to find out the real reasons that led to this kind of "ballet in which the dancers used their hands instead of their toes to perform American Indian dances in the streets of Casablanca."

Have the officials of the Democratic Confederation of Labor, as members of the Moroccan Labor Federation are saying, been struck by "a political famine?"

Mr Noubair Mohamed Al-Amaoui, former secretary general of the confederation, who was a teacher of the Arabic language in one of Casablanca's secondary schools before assuming the leadership of the labor union that is affiliated with the Socialist Union of People's Forces, responds that the charges that are being leveled against him do not diminish the "credibility of the labor union" which he represents in a country like Morocco

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where capitalist organizations play an extremely important role in steering numerous social and economic activists. These capitalist organizations do so without ignoring the ideological contention that exists within the multiple labor unions which propose different remedies for the shaky economic condition." Al-Amaoui goes on to say, "The confederation thinks that no confrontation operation would be enough to change the economic and political course in Morocco. All the choices which confirm that they could improve the situation ought to be reconsidered. At this time labor unions that are competing with us think that existing economic facts on the Moroccan scene, and by extension in the world with which we deal, presume the use of 'cold fingers' instead of a scalpel. This means that we are revolutionaries and our purpose is to absorb the cases of labor unions retracting their positions in Morocco and to work to restore hope to workers' hearts and to the unemployed who wait."

The Glass Men

"This is the battle of labor union members who stand behind sheets of glass," says an official spokesman for the General Federation of Workers, which supports the Independence party, in the course of his response to confederation members. He emphasizes the fact that men in this case are as vulnerable as sheets of glass. The spokesman accuses Noubair Mohamed Al-Amaoui of serving as "a free guard for the leaders of the Socialist Union of People's Forces" whose circles rely on the government's tolerance in carrying out their undemocratic practices.

Officials of the Democratic Confederation of Labor do not hide their heads in the sand like ostriches. They rather respond to their critics, emphasizing the specific nature of their labor union course amidst traditional courses of action which leave workers without protection facing an attack by factory owners and economic activists. They regard the nature and scope of labor union activity to be that of a daily task of struggle, finding a place for workers in the social development process and guaranteeing their rights and their historical interests.

Officials of the confederation come under the essence of this definition: Labor union action is tied with a fertile and complex chain [of events] in which the working class with its socio-historical characteristics interacts with the economic-political system in which it evolves. The tie revolves around the confrontation between the worker and the employer in a process of dialectal contention. This is because action to mobilize workers is a form of class struggle whose objective is to curb exploitation and the infringement of capitalists on the rights and gains of workers. Hence emerges the difference between labor union action and political action which does not serve the working class unless it is guided by its socialist ideology.

Regarding the conditions of labor union action Noubair Mohamed Al-Amaoui says [the following]:

1. Democracy [is to be observed] in operations and steering, and a pyramid-like executive structure is to be chosen in the context of a progressive

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course. In this field the link between progressiveness and democracy is organic and is manifested in raising the standard of workers, politicizing them and intensifying their sense of responsibility for the struggle.

2. Demagoguery, which is the weapon of the petty bourgeoisie, is to be renounced. This bourgeoisie is trying to minimize the role of the work and impose a higher or a bureaucratic guardianship on them.

3. The labor union struggle is to be set in motion so that the weapons that are being used by employers against workers can be understood. These weapons are: stupefying the workers with syrupy sweet promises and provoking them with challenges. However, the insistence on hard and inflexible equations conceals a shift to the right as is the case with the Moroccan Labor Federation which has been resorting for years to the weapon of limited strikes and to unequal channels of dialogue with the government.

4. The labor union struggle is to be merged with the course of an integrated political plan for national liberation that seeks to establish a socialist society. We must hence be cautious of the pitfalls of labor union chaos that lead to the elimination of labor as a tool for mapping out change and progress toward socialism.

5. If the movement of 20 March, which gave birth to the Moroccan Labor Federation, has historically constituted one of the tools of national independence, (al-Amawi) does not hesitate to describe the birth of the Democratic Confederation of Labor on 25 November 1978 as one of the tools of national liberation and socialist change.

The Accomplishments

Confederation officials discuss the accomplishments in whose achievement the confederation had played a part by making direct labor demands. They say, "At the (Klinison) factory emphasis was placed on a 30 percent increase in wages and compensations and on [payments made] into the social security fund and retirement. Workers at (Bidamu) Textiles in Casablanca gained conditions that would make their arduous work more humane. Workers at the DIMAC bicycle plant modeled their demands accordingly when they stipulated a series of demands among which were a 40 percent wage increase, a determination of transfer compensations and pay, the standardization of the production and the 13th month bonus, an annual medical examination for all employees, and the settlement of the status of workers with seniority. Workers of the (Safadi) plant achieved new gains because of their defiance and their unity. Those gains ran the gamut of an increase in wages and transfer compensations. Sugar workers in Souk Es Sebt exerted pressure to forestall arbitrary measures that were being taken against them."

Confederation officials go on to say, "We chose these specific examples to underscore our plan of struggle which is programmed according to priorities of living. Our plan is neither an imploration nor a plea to the generosity of the employer. It is a demand for the simplest duties; and it is a process of bringing daily misery in the working class to a standstill. Hence comes our unified struggle to achieve [the following]:

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- "Labor union and democratic liberties.
- "An increase in wages equal to the increase in prices since 1973.
- "The application of an adjustable scale of compensations.
- "Review of the system of production bonuses.
- "A guaranteed right to work and unemployment compensation.
- "The universalization of the social security law.
- "Guaranteed healthy housing for workers.
- "The universalization of collective contracts and reviewing them to protect the interests of workers.
- "Guaranteed transportation at the organizations' expense.
- "Workers are to be enabled to conduct and monitor the social affairs interests, and the administration and the government are to observe total neutrality.
- "All daily workers in the public and semi-public sectors, in the principal utilities and in the private sector are to be tenured employees.
- "Hired and temporary labor is to be abolished, and the training period is to be reduced to 3 months after which the worker would become part of the basic staff as a permanent worker.
- "Hired work is subject to labor legislation and laws in the industrial and commercial sectors."

This hodgepodge of demands is set forth by confederation members in the course of a coherent analysis of the economic-political situation in Morocco from the sixties until today. They say, "1960 was a decisive turning point for the Moroccan National Movement whose labor union failed to oppose the government's choices and to form a ring around its progressive members.

"The reaction came from the toiling masses who decided to hold a general strike on 16 June 1961. The strike failed, and this at that time endorsed the government's liberal course and separated the enemies of workers from those who were defending them. This trend also unmasked the conduct of the Moroccan Labor Federation in its capacity as the principal labor union at that time and it also exposed its 'official' tactics which had set forth demagogic slogans such as 'the bread policy' to justify its deviation."

Confederation members add along the same line, "Any labor gain is at heart a political gain because it forces capitalists to shed their skins. It also forces labor union bureaucracy to reveal its ugly face when it launches its war on several fronts, among which are:

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--"Promoting the method of bargaining and showing disdain.

--"Contending with the democratic decision.

--"Breaking up the active agencies and isolating those who surround themselves with broad cadres of fighters.

In front of this shotgun policy grass roots labor organizations were forced to impose democracy inside factories and organizations. This made them the target of vicious resistance from capitalists and heroic labor union members. Whenever fighters made a concession to preserve labor unity, the union leadership would turn its back on its promises and avoid the adoption of progressive choices. This "erosion" made the labor union phenomenon as it stood on the threshold of the seventies appear to be a paper gun or a paralyzed arm that had no consideration for anything but the interests of national and foreign capital.

Noubair Mohamed Al Amaoui makes a statement about this very special evaluation of his group. "We have two enemies: exploitation and its class tools and labor union corruption. Because we reject both unequivocally, we have tried to fashion a labor union personality within the framework of the Democratic Confederation of Labor, which is a corrective movement, and within the exhausted labor union traditions in Morocco. The confederation is a tool for unifying labor regardless of workers' political orientations and ideological convictions. We have set interim functions and other long-term functions within a schedule of priorities which revolve around the nucleus of the struggle as a vital question. This is instead of being stuck in a phase of passive defense, such as the Moroccan Labor Federation, or preserving the interests of the bourgeoisie and fragmenting the expansion of labor, such as the General Federation of Workers.

The list of disputes is a long one in the archives of Moroccan labor union activity. The "fiery arrows" phenomenon has never been absent for a single day from the tense competition between the labor union organizations. And here is the "Achilles' heel" of having multiple labor unions and the reason why numerous gains would have been available to Moroccan workers had it not been for the increased tone of oneupmanship and the desire to monopolize labor union programs which each party is claiming for itself. We ask here, "What is the reason for this labor union fragmentation and for the clash in colors, directions and practices? What is the reason for this quixotic attitude in positions that do no more than register points by way of competition at the expense of the sanctity of the sweat, the tears, the restlessness and the continuous effort of workers?

If labor union officials are honest with themselves and with the workers they claim to represent, why don't they unite into a single broad union that would constitute an expansion of labor that would be capable of wresting workers' demands instead of competing with each other and fighting marginal battles?

We do not doubt the credibility of the labor union leaders we met in

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Casablanca and Rabat, and we are not scrutinizing their intentions, their directions and their accomplishments. But the economic and social challenges in a country like Morocco, where annual births cancel out all the dams and structures that are built by the government in the areas of education, employment and the environment, the challenge of managing the affairs of citizens make it incumbent that the labor union be united so it can raise the consciousness of workers in the general membership instead of theorizing at the top and formulating verbal revolution.

There is a political multiplicity and a genuine democracy in Morocco that have to be steered on to the course of an effective labor union unity. Such a union would work to reduce automation in production and impart a more humane character to it, especially in the absence of the ability to make self-determination choices.

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SYRIA

OBJECTIVES OF SOVIET-SYRIAN NAVAL EXERCISES ANALYZED

Naval Base at Latakia

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 232,24-30 Jul 81 pp 21-23

[Article: "The Soviet Fleet in the Eastern Mediterranean: Swimming in Warm Water:]

/Text/ Russia's dream, since the Czars, has been to take its fleet out of the chill of cold and frozen waters so it can swim in warm ones. Today it appears that the Soviets have realized the Czars' dream: Soviet fleets are riding the waves of the oceans and dominating the most important seas. The latest amphibious maneuvers along the Syrian coast are only one item demonstrating the tremendous progress the Soviets have made in confronting the West's classic supremacy in a field they had monopolized until recently on the open seas. Participating in preparing this investigation which AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI is offering on the Soviet-Syrian maneuvers, the naval arms race between the two great powers and the Arabs' dilemma vis-a-vis the process of polarization between Moscow and Washington in the area were the magazine's correspondents and the editors of its political section.

The Friendship and Cooperation Treaty

The Soviets, after some hesitation, agreed to sign a treaty of friendship and cooperation with Syria, and today they are reaping its political fruits in their confrontation with the United States in the region. The regime in Damascus is concentrating on the military and security aspect of the treaty in coping with its Arab and domestic isolation and its entanglement in Lebanon.

It was the United States, not Syria, which disclosed the joint Soviet-Syrian naval maneuvers which took place the first week of July off the Syrian coast, which stretches for about 140 kilometers along the eastern Mediterranean.

Official Syrian sources refused to offer any information on the size or extent of the maneuvers, but they did give one explanation for them, which was that they were "to deter Israel."

The purpose of the Syrian blackout on the maneuvers was basically to avoid provoking the moderate Arab countries whose help Syria is now soliciting in order to extricate itself from the involvement in Lebanon. However, the American declaration on these maneuvers was not met with anger here /in Damascus/. In its domestic and Arab isolation, the regime wants everyone to feel that its alliance with the Soviets is in force.

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However, there is increased sensitivity in Syria toward the rapprochement with the Soviets. That country, in various periods in the past, was zealous about its total independence; aside from its defense agreements in the framework of the Arab League, it did not sign any military agreements with any foreign country.

People who are opposed to the alliance with the Soviets say that the regime has brought Syria into the international arena of polarization and has made it a party to the international confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States in the region, adding to Arab doubts about President al-Asad's foreign policy and also adding to tensions in Arab relations, especially since such a strong neighboring country as Iraq has insisted that the Arabs follow a totally independent policy that is not aligned with either of the international camps.

The fact is that since President al-Asad took power in Syria in 1970, the Soviet Union has insisted on concluding a treaty of peace and cooperation. It refrained from doing so after the October War apathy that afflicted bilateral relations following Moscow's criticism of Syria's military involvement in Lebanon in 1976-1977.

The line was then reversed and the Syrian regime started to insist on signing the treaty when its Arab isolation increased and it entered into a bloody confrontation with the religious opposition. The Soviets appeared hesitant because they did not want to stand openly, through the medium of a treaty, at the side of a regime which did not enjoy popularity in its own country. Nonetheless they finally responded to Syria's importunings, and a treaty of friendship and cooperation actually was signed last October.

Since then, the Syrians have constantly emphasized the defensive and military aspects of the treaty, which contains provisions on mutual consultation and coordination in the event of danger to the security of either of the two countries, while the Soviets have considered the treaty a strong card in support of their position in the region (especially following their 1972 departure from Egypt) and in confronting the violent criticism they have faced since their military intervention in Afghanistan.

Following the Camp David agreements, the treaty was an opportunity for the Soviets to assert to Washington that it would be difficult to arrive at a settlement in the region without consulting and cooperating with them.

The treaty has also had practical benefits within Syria itself. It has allowed the Communist Party, which is a client of Moscow's, to resume its overt activity and reorganize its ranks and cells under the leadership of Bakdash, while the authorities have been prosecuting Riyad al-Turk's wing in the party, which has been pursuing a line independent of Moscow and calling upon the regime liberally to implant public freedoms in the country and follow a policy of practical rapprochement with the Arab countries.

No details are known on military cooperation between Syria and the Soviet Union in the context of the treaty, but the prevailing belief here is that following the signing of the treaty Syria received between 100 and 200 T-72 tanks, which are considered to be the most modern and powerful in the world. It also received

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squadrons of MiG-25 and MiG-27 aircraft, as well as 2,500 Soviet experts and advisors, most of whom are working in the Syrian armed forces. It is said that Moscow has exempted Syria from paying a debt of \$500 million.

Naval facilities are a matter of the utmost importance for the Soviets. It appears, from the recent joint maneuvers, that the Soviet fleet has extended its use of the military naval base in the southern part of the port of Latakia. Before the treaty, the Soviets had been using this base for maintenance and bunkering, after they had lost the major facilities in Alexandria.

Soviet Maneuvers

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 232, 24-30 Jul 80 pp 23-24

[Article: "Twelve Amphibious Ships Participate in Landing Troops on the Syrian Coast"]

/Text/ What are the political and military objectives of the joint Soviet-Syrian maneuvers in the eastern Mediterranean? AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI's diplomatic correspondent is drawing an integrated picture of the maneuvers on the basis of information and evaluations provided by French strategic experts and informed diplomatic circles in the French capital.

Early this July, Soviet and Western fleets moved into the eastern Mediterranean in the biggest massing of naval forces there since the 1973 war.

The joint Soviet-Syrian maneuvers took place in a tense atmosphere which presaged the outbreak of war in the Middle East, following the Israeli raid on Iraqi nuclear installations, Begin's reiterated threat to strike at 12 Syrian missile batteries in Lebanon, and the ferocious escalation of raids in Beirut and the Palestinian camps.

French officials and Arab and Western diplomatic circles in Paris have followed the situation in the Middle East with concern and anxiety. They fear that the outbreak of an Arab-Israeli confrontation might lead to a faceoff between the United States and the Soviet Union.

In the view of French strategic experts, the Soviets' goal in the latest maneuvers in the eastern Mediterranean is to underline their superiority and dominance in that important section of the sea, to guarantee a permanent linkup with its warm waters, and also to exert pressure to cause the redeployment of the American deterrent force recently concentrated in the entryways to the Arab Gulf.

The American objective, in the event a confrontation does take place in the Mediterranean, may be summarized as protecting Europe's oil supplies, supporting the south flank of NATO (Turkey and Greece) and protecting Israel.

The Americans consider that the Soviet maneuvers in the eastern Mediterranean have brought on an escalation of tension in the area and consider it an escalation of the Syrian missile crisis in Lebanon. They say that that has occurred as a Soviet response in practice to the Reagan administration's threats and new plans for extending military spending in order to regain military supremacy in the world and to the administration's decision to rearm China and Pakistan.

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However, the immediate goal of the maneuvers may have been to prevent the Israelis from carrying out an offensive operation against the Syrians and Palestinians in Lebanon. The Soviet NOVOSTI PRESS AGENCY mentioned that Israel gave America's emissary, Phillip Habib, 2 weeks to put an end to the missile crisis.

Europeans in general view Soviet maneuvers in the eastern Mediterranean as an indication of the growth of the Soviet navy in the Mediterranean and an increase in their feeling of confidence regarding the role of this force in times of crisis. The participation of the small Syrian fleet in the maneuvers indicates Syria's increased importance to Moscow following the Soviets' exit from Egypt.

Paris took note of the statements Marshal Ustakov, the Soviet chief of staff, made at the time of the maneuvers, when he spoke of Moscow's close attention to the efforts the United States is making to achieve military supremacy and escalate the arms race. For the first time, statements by Soviet military figures are devoid of traditional references to "peaceful Soviet intentions." Ustakov said that any international conflict "could become a decisive conflict between the two competing social systems" and warned that the future of mankind was in danger and that the five continents would be dragged into a conflict which would exceed any previous international struggle in its destructiveness and viciousness. He asserted that if the Soviet Union was invaded its forces would conduct "advanced offensive operations on land, sea and air."

The Soviet maneuvers in the eastern Mediterranean are taking place amidst elements and signs that provoke the anxiety of the Soviets. Bilateral relations with the United States continue to deteriorate, the Reagan administration is setting out plans to establish a tremendous strategic and naval force, and Western attempts to effect an opening to the eastern bloc have become bolder.

In Asia and the Middle East, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan has produced a state of indifference in relations with Islamic countries and the nonaligned movement, and the Iran-Iraq war has complicated relations between Moscow and both Baghdad and Tehran, while plans to form a rapid deployment force have added to the Soviets' doubts regarding the United States. Today the Soviets want to return to the Middle East in force through coordination with Syria, Libya and South Yemen.

Therefore Moscow is offering enormous military aid to countries which are its friends in the region. Estimates are that 85 percent of the Soviet military aid offered to Third World countries since 1954, which totalled \$47 billion, has gone to countries in the Arab area, principally Egypt, Syria, Iraq, South Yemen and Algeria.

Military Information on the Maneuvers

Military and diplomatic information available in Paris concerning the maneuvers in the eastern Mediterranean is extremely scarce and contradictory. In general this information indicates that the maneuvers involved a naval landing and joint exercises.

French strategic experts described the Soviet vessels taking part in the maneuvers as being the biggest massing since the 1973 war, when 95 ships were involved. The current concentration totals 53 vessels, as compared with 40 in ordinary circumstances.

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Among the 53 vessels were 20 warships, including a Moskva helicopter carrier and 12 amphibious vessels which were in charge of transporting about 600 Soviet soldiers onto Syrian territory. It is said that a squadron of TU-16 bombers and four reconnaissance airplanes carrying anti-submarine missiles preceded the Soviet fleet to the Syrian bases.

The French note that the Soviet fleet is active in warm water remote from the seas and straits the NATO fleets dominate, and therefore that Moscow is anxious to establish integrated, self-sufficient naval contingents in such areas as the eastern Mediterranean and the southern inlet to the Red Sea. At the same time, Moscow is trying to acquire facilities and bases for these contingents in areas where it is active in order to reduce their dependence on rear bases on the Soviet coasts.

One can say, on the basis of French estimates, that the Soviet fleet maintains total dominance in the eastern Mediterranean, while the American Sixth Fleet retains supremacy in the western Mediterranean. The average number of American vessels active in the Mediterranean is 26, 18 of which are assault craft. The Americans believe that their fleet in the Mediterranean still preserves relative superiority in terms of ships, missiles and naval aircraft.

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TUNISIA

BOURGUIBA COMMENTS ON CURRENT ARAB EVENTS

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic No 229, 3-9 Jul 81 pp 17-21

[Report on Interview with Habib Bourguiba, President of Tunisia, by Florence Ra'd; in Tunis; date not specified: "Habib Bourguiba Says in First Interview with Press in 6 Years, 'This Is My Advice to the Arabs' "]

[Text] "If we continue to pursue emotional policies, we will remain in this situation for hundreds of years."
"We are proud of Iraq's accomplishments; the recent attack on Iraq was a national tragedy."
"Lebanon is a case of heartfelt humiliation; it is a bleeding wound in the nation's bosom."

The Tunisian president has not granted an interview to the press for 6 years. The events which Tunisia experienced in these 6 years can be classified under [the category of] historical changes: the labor events of January 1978; the Libyan Gafsa, which has been described as the 1980 earthquake; and then the new democratic legislation with the concurrent genuine openness toward the Arab homeland.

Hundreds of Arab and foreign correspondents had asked for an interview appointment since that date. Among them are close friends of the great freedom fighter. But the response from the palace was always negative.

AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI was able to penetrate this blockade and win a quiet meeting with the Tunisian president in the presence of his prime minister, Mr Mohamed Mzali, who gets along very well with the president. The conversation was spontaneous, rich in its humanitarian and historical proportions. It included a political reading of the current situation and another historical "word of advice"--this was how the president himself described it--to the Arabs.

This was not a press interview in the dry, informative sense of the word. The Tunisian president had separated himself from the press a long time ago, having become satisfied with the volumes that had been written about Tunisia's modern history which included his political views and the story of his struggle. It was a spontaneous, cordial meeting. There was no

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protocol, and there were no complications. Its significance lay in the fact that it caused a leader at the height of his human and political maturity to pause in front of history, in front of himself and in front of the moment which the Arab homeland is experiencing. The interview caused Bourguiba to pause, and it took him back to his childhood, to his relationship with his mother and his brothers and to his relationship with Tunisia in whose love he has spent his life. Palestine was the first wound; Lebanon was the second; and then came the recent Israeli attack on Iraq.

The long meeting that brought me together with President Bourguiba, which was interrupted by a luncheon, was and will continue to be one of the happiest days of my life in journalism. It gave me much self-confidence and a greater sense of pride in the organization with which I am affiliated. It is an organization for which the great freedom fighter has special affection.

When the telephone rang at 7:30 am, I did not expect the caller to be the broadcasting director of Tunisian radio. I thought it might be a call from Paris, but then the voice of the colleague Salih Jagham, the host of the program, "Yawm Sa'id" [Good Day], woke me up to this Tunisian morning.

Salih Jergham introduced the magazine, AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI affectionately. He said it was the only Arab magazine that since its establishment has devoted special columns for [dealing with] the questions of the Arabs in the world and the questions of Arab workers and immigrants. Then he spoke about the colleague, Dr Nabil Maghrabi who had visited Tunisia more than once. He then concluded by introducing me with gentle words. I thanked him, of course, for his sincere greetings, and then we had a brief exchange about my meeting with Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali, my attendance of the final session of the Advisory Cultural Committees, the expatriate press and Tunisian women. The conversation gave me an opportunity to digress to the [subject of] bilateral relations that tie Tunisia with Lebanon, from Tyre to Carthage; the 'Uqbah ibn Nafi' mosque, the first mosque to be built in Kairouan; Islamic civilization in Africa, south Italy and Spain; and the Arabic heritage in general.

A Surprising Invitation

The voice of Colleague Jergham was not the only surprise [that day]. Seconds later the telephone rang again, and the caller this time was the general manager of Tunisian radio and television. He said, "Miss Ra'd, the great freedom fighter enjoyed listening to your discussion, and he would like you to have lunch with him in Murnaq Castle. He told me of his wish because he does not know the name of the hotel where you are staying." My response was, "I would be honored." I felt this was a kind gesture from the president that showed considerable humility on his part. Then I thought about the fact that he does not miss anything in the lives of his people and that he also sees and hears everything in the Tunisian media, and it surprised me that he would always be on top of everything in Tunisian affairs. He listens to the radio, and he reads the letters that he receives

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from citizens. It may be that the "Yawm Sa'id" program was one of those windows through which the president could view public life in Tunisia in a direct way.

It was 12:30 when I arrived at the palace. I was greeted in the entrance hall by the director of protocol, Abdelmajid El Karaoui. He is a 37-year old man, one of a select group of young capable men who form a circle around the Tunisian president.

Murnaq Castle is one of four castles owned by the Tunisian state. The largest of these castles is Carthage Castle; it is followed by al-Sa'adah Castle in al-Marsa, which is designated for the guests of the head of state; then there is al-Monastir Castle which is in the president's birth-place. Murnaq is located amidst green fields where fruitful trees abound such as lemon, apple, orange and pear trees. Besides these fields, there are others where Tunisian melons grow. Murnaq is located 20 kilometers to the east of the capital, Tunis, and it occupies an area of approximately 5 square kilometers of gardens. It is a one-story building built in the old Tunisian style. Because the presidency has great respect for the Urban Regulation Law, the entrances and the windows of the castle have been painted white.

Elegant Ancestry

The Tunisian president greeted me with paternal affection. He told me he was pleased to meet a young Lebanese correspondent whom he had decided to invite and talk to after hearing her voice on Tunisian radio.

In a hall covered with valuable carpets from Kairouan he sat and talked spontaneously and affectionately about everything. He was surrounded by the prime minister, the ministers of the interior and agriculture, Dr Boussoffara and Mrs Raja' El Almi, the first [female] editor-in-chief in Tunisia. The colors of the carpets in the hall matched the colors of the green velvet modern chairs as well as those of the curtains and comfortable sofas. The president appeared to be relaxed in a dignified and kind way. He was wearing a navy blue suit with a light blue necktie. The prime minister, however, was wearing a light blue suit and a navy blue necktie.

I said this was not a press interview in the full sense of the word, but it was [also] more than a mere press interview. I will try to be faithful to the president's words, to the years of his struggle which are rich in giving, and to his opinions on everything, from Tunisian women, to poetry, literature, life and the Arab future. But I will digress somewhat from talking about his spontaneity so I can recollect a few scattered thoughts.

"This Is My Advice..."

He said, "I was listening to the radio in the morning and I heard you. I [then] told myself that I had to meet this Lebanese woman."

I replied, "The Lebanese people have deep affection and appreciation for you. I am not surprised by this kind gesture."

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Mr Mzali, who had accompanied the Tunisian president on his well-known visit to Lebanon in 1965 interrupted me and said, "I was with his excellency, the president during that visit, and I remember that at that time he called a harsh press conference against Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir because the Egyptian president had at that time provoked the agencies of the media in Beirut. Afterwards,..."

The great freedom fighter finished the statement and then read in front of me part of a speech he had delivered in 1965 in front of a group of Palestinians in the city of Jericho on the West Bank. In that speech he had said, "The sense of pride and optimism I have about the enthusiasm, the iron will and the determination I've perceived to regain the full, undiminished [Palestinian] rights increases my desire to work and my appreciation for the effort to regain the usurped land. But to do so, emotions and national sentiments will not suffice for the achievement of victory over colonialism. Along with enthusiasm, we must be prepared to sacrifice, to die and to give up our lives, and we must have a successful leadership that is endowed with many qualities. We must also have a mind that thinks, plans and looks ahead to the future."

Bourguiba adds, "It is easy and very simple to talk at length in stirring language, but what is more difficult and more important is being truthful in what we say, sincere in our actions and above board in what we do. If it becomes clear to us that our forces cannot annihilate the enemy and hurl him into the sea, we are not to ignore this fact, but we are rather to take it into our consideration. As we continue to struggle with our bare hands, we are to use strategy and we are to derive that strategy from our positions so that we can make progress one step at a time towards [our] goal by relying on cunning and effort. It is no secret that war is a cycle of attacks and retreats."

Then he says, "It seems that this matter was difficult for many of the Arabs. Actually the disaster which befell us and the fact that we stopped at the borders of Arab Palestine are indications that the leadership was not successful."

He finished reading these passages; then he looked at me and said, "Read what I said 17 years ago. This is my advice to you and to all the Arabs so that you can balance not only emotion and enthusiasm, but also all the underlying assumptions of the question on the basis of what you were told by an honest man whose honesty, sincerity and devotion you do not doubt. This is how we could reach the goal instead of staying 17 or 20 more years repeating words to no avail about the usurped homeland. If we confine ourselves to emotion, we will remain in this situation for hundreds of years. This is what I am calling your attention to. I believe it is inevitable that men will emerge from the ranks of the Arabs who will have enough courage to be honest with the people and to continue the struggle with all its devious paths, its radiant moments, its stages, its cunning and its cycles of attacks and retreats so that we can ensure full victory and the restoration of the usurped right, not only for ourselves, but also for the generations that will follow."

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I said, "Can we go back to your project for a little while?"

He replied, "I had said then, let us accept the UN solution and accept the partition resolution. But now, as you see, no one is talking about the partition resolution that was issued in 1947. All the settlements deal with land or with the land that was occupied in 1967."

The Bombing Tragedy

He was silent for a few moments as though he had remembered something. Then he said, "The fact is that Iraq, which is the only Arab country that has nuclear power, had made us proud of what it had accomplished. But the brutal bombing that Israel carried out against the Iraqi nuclear reactor is another certain indication of Israel's desire to destroy any Arab power, whether it be peaceful or military. Although caution with this despicable enemy is essential, it would be appropriate for us to stand beside the president and the people of Iraq and denounce this crime which I regard as a national tragedy. I expressed my feelings in an urgent telegram I sent Iraqi president, Saddam Husayn. I also gave instructions to our minister of foreign affairs, Beji Caid Essebsi to go to New York, to lead our delegation there and to participate in the meetings of the UN Security Council."

The Bleeding Wound

It were as though the recent aggression reminded President Bourguiba of the continued aggression: the Lebanese wound. He went on to say, "I love Lebanon whose beautiful name has given the country unparalleled beauty. This country has many advantages. In some aspects it captures one's affections, and in others it occupies one's thoughts. It also stirs lofty thoughts and awakens old memories in one's heart. It were as though a traveler who was on tour between the regions of this world or the casual student of the epochs of past history could not stop at Lebanon without finding himself deeply moved, his horizons broadened and his innermost thoughts having an urgent need to soar to the level of everlasting fundamental questions which have been the essence of the human adventure since the earliest days.

"This is because such a traveler or casual student would find in Lebanon an excellent vantage point from which human ideas had emerged on this Mediterranean Sea ever since the dawn of history. This was the most fertile cradle of ideas and the hottest melting pot for those ideas humanity has known for its successive civilizations. The civilizations of scores of countries and nations that flourished on the shores of the Mediterranean were all showered with the surplus of the sea's abundant depths. The sea marked them all with its radiant genius and tied them together spiritually and consanguineously. All over that basin and throughout the long epochs of history echoes of this human civilization have been heard east and west in all its corners: from Tyre to Carthage; from Crete (Iqritish, 674) to Athens, from Athens to Alexandria; from Rome to Byzantium; and from Damascus to Kairouan and Cordoba.

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"These are the ideas and the memories that would grip one who passes by Lebanon. These are the ideas that I had stated in Beirut on 10 March 1965 when I was on my Arab tour. Today, 16 years after that tour, I find what is happening in Lebanon painful. Lebanon, this country that is dear to my heart, the country that has been living a tragedy for 6 years, is a bleeding wound in the bosom of the Arab nation. This country that is patiently enduring its wounds is enduring more than it can bear. I am distressed and hurt by the development of events there and by the destruction and fragmentation from which your country is suffering."

These statements sincerely expressed by President Bourguiba encouraged me to change the subject of the conversation to his private life and to the world of memories which had left deep marks on his political positions. I began with a question about women, and I said, "What did you do for women in Tunisia?"

"What Did You Do for Women?"

He replied, "First, I wrote many articles encouraging women to give up the veil, to go to school and to obtain higher degrees that would qualify them to compete with men as far as scientific ability is concerned. I also encouraged women to enter different fields of employment. There are female attorneys, physicians, engineers, members of parliament and judges. I also advised that a law which would allow contraception be introduced, and this law was adopted by the National Assembly at that time, and it has been in effect since 1974. I also gave women their civil, political and economic rights, and I gave them personal independence and an opportunity to build themselves and their futures. A woman is the other member of society who builds the homeland, and she has the right to learn, to study and to specialize [in a field of work] just as a man. This legislation was enacted in 1957."

[Ra'd] But despite the encouragement you gave women there are no female ministers in Tunisia!

[Bourguiba] There are four female members of parliament. One of them is the vice president of the assembly; she is Mrs Fathia Mzali. She once chaired one of the sessions in the absence of the speaker. Also the Tunisian National General Alliance for Women is interested in the development of women's affairs and in protecting and guiding women.

[Ra'd] In Iraq and Syria there are 20 female members of parliament, and sometimes there are female ministers.

[Bourguiba] We encourage women, but not at the expense of men, and the selection would be democratic.

The president spoke about the Holy Koran which asked men to be fair to the rights of their wives, especially since the pre-Islamic age allowed men to marry from 10 to 20 women. He quoted the holy verse from the chapter [entitled], "Women:" "If you fear that you cannot treat orphans with

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fairness, then you may marry other women who seem good to you: two, three, or four of them. But if you fear that you cannot maintain equality among them, marry only one or (a captive), that your right hands possess. This will make it easier for you to avoid injustice. (Surah IV Nisa', Verse 3).

Then he spoke about the Personal Status Code which he issued in August 1956. The principal factor that appeared to be revolutionary in the Personal Status Code was the anti-polygamy law which--according to President Bourguiba's opinion--was considered consistent with the spirit of the age by a few modern Muslim legislators. This is because polygamy in the last quarter of the 20th century is no longer acceptable because it challenges the spirit of justice.

The president or the great freedom fighter, as the Tunisian people like to call him, added, "The greatest problem was that there were no judges who would agree to execute these laws. However, the broad authorities that I gave them made them give priority to this legislation and execute it with flexibility."

[Ra'd] Didn't you face difficulties, Your Excellency, Mr President?

[Bourguiba] There were many difficulties and major challenges, but I was able to establish victory and overcome these difficulties with a strong will. What was the most difficult matter was educating the people and getting them used to the changes to which they had not been accustomed. What was difficult or even impossible in the fifties is now acceptable and reasonable in the eighties.

The president repeated his statement about polygamy being harmful to the dignity and well-being of women. Polygamy debases women, giving them no other purpose [in life] but that of pleasing their husbands lest they turn away from them to other women. The president said that he sent anyone who married two women to jail, but in return, he permitted divorce if the two parties could not come to an agreement.

[Ra'd] Do you meet Tunisian women from time to time?

[Bourguiba] On 3 June [this year] I visited the Center for Rural Girls in the al-Zuhur community.

And here Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali said, "It was a great day, Your Excellency, Mr President..."

Habib Bourguiba added, "I saw the girls working, studying and learning numerous vocations and professions from cosmetology to tailoring, embroidery, carpet making, typesetting books and pottery. What pleased me was that one of the girls had been sent to France to specialize and to complete her diploma. She came back from France after achieving excellence in her specialty. I have invited 600 girls to the presidential palace in Carthage so I can meet with them and discuss their problems with them."

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Remove the Huts

[Ra'd] Tunisian women have the right to be proud of what you have done for them.

[Bourguiba] I do what I believe in, but did you know that the minister of housing has handed out 200 keys to the resident of al-Marsa who live in huts? God willing, the story of the huts will come to an end and we will be able to help Tunisians acquire homes. [We hope] that before 1982 comes to an end, all the huts will have disappeared from the republic.

In other references the Tunisian president focused on the government's efforts on cleanliness, and he said he "did not like to see disharmony between Tunisian buildings: a large building such as the Africa Building, which consists of 21 floors, disfigured by a small store." The minister of the interior said that the store owner refused to remove the store and that there was another piece of land used by another person as a parking lot for cars.

And here Bourguiba appeared to be rigid. He said, "Let us remove it, i.e., tear the store down and compensate him. I want this street to be like the Champs Elysees in Paris."

And here the prime minister spoke, "We got rid of a large number of new chaotic buildings, and we charged a special team of 300 inspectors with the task of getting rid of this phenomenon. However, many people build these huts at night, during their leisure hours and also on weekends."

I asked, "With what do they build these huts?"

Mzali said, "With cardboard, bricks and mud. One time a whole tribe took over a piece of land at night and after three days of holidays a chaotic village came into existence. We had to call on the police and the bulldozers for help. The bulldozers tore down the unlicensed buildings."

Mzali spoke about the conditions that violators take advantage of, and he said that when he came to power he found thousands of sentences that had not been carried out.

[Ra'd] What did you do with them?

"What is important is that all new operations have finally been checked, and we are now trying to solve the problem of buildings that have been there before."

President Bourguiba said here, "What is important is to get rid of these huts and to build elsewhere in an organized fashion. Chaotic construction damages the beauty of nature and the environment."

[Mzali] We began this in Bab Sa'dun --an area inside the capital, Tunis.

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Memories with Mussolini

We moved to the table. Lunch was simple: broiled salad--a traditional Tunisian dish; broiled fish; and fried steak. The discussion dealt with Mussolini who had released President Bourguiba during his second term of imprisonment, hoping to win him over to his side. The president said, "I told Mussolini that we were grateful for the hospitality of the Axis powers and that this gratitude was personal. However, as far as our country was concerned, there were other forces trying to seize Tunisia at a time when we were facing the forces of French colonialism in our country.

"Mussolini asked me, 'What country do you mean?'

"I said, 'I don't know exactly, since there are several countries.' "

Bourguiba commented on this incident further: "Before that period Hitler had published on the walls of Paris a statement which mentioned that the German military forces were stationed in North Africa to expel British and American forces. I understood what they intended by this. I went to them with the late 'Ali al-Belhaouane to protest, and I met an official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs whom I asked, 'What will you be doing with us in this case?' He told me, 'Don't be afraid, sir. We did not enter the war for the sake of Nice or Savoie in France. We want Tunisia.' So I said in Arabic, 'Do you hear this, Allala?' (Allala Laouiti is the president's private secretary).

"This caught my attention. Since the Germans had sent us to the Italians, that meant that Tunisia will fall to the lot of Italy."

Insomnia and Poetry

At the table I asked the president about his health. He said, "I became insomniac 10 years ago. Days and nights used to go by, and I would not be able to sleep because there was too much work and the responsibility was burdensome. Now, thank God, this crisis is gone. A simple drug helped me [overcome this problem]."

Prime Minister Mzali whispered to me that the great freedom fighter memorized poetry, so I turned to him and asked, "Do you actually know French poetry well?" He said, "I also like Arabic poetry; I memorize it and I study the method of reciting it." The president reminisced about his childhood and early education and added, "I was a student in the al-Sadiqiyah school where the senior professors came from al-Zaytuniyah Mosque. Our teacher in the first stage of secondary education was Professor 'Izz al-Din al-'Ayib . He began teaching us literature with the oldest collection of Arabic poems, al-Mu' allaqat. I liked the authors of the seven poems, but the poetry of al-Samaw'al is unforgettable." Then he recited lines from the famous poem by al-Samaw'al :

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"If wickedness does not dishonor man,
His guise and vestments will appear fair.
If he does not attribute injustice to its source,
The beauty of praise becomes unattainable.
She reproaches us that our numbers are few,
So I told her the noble are few.
Those who remain like us are but seldom seen,
Young and old aspiring high.
Little do we need, and dear is our charge;
And servile is the charge of many."

From al-Samaw'al he moved on to discuss in detail the poetry of Alfred de Musset and the errors in diction he made in a poem for the sake of meter. Then he moved to Victor Hugo's bitter satire of Napoleon III who tried to bask in the glory of Napoleon I and assume that glory for himself. Bourguiba recited a poem that began [as follows]: "Is it for you that my father and my uncles who built with us the glory of the Rivoli, the Marengo and the Friedland lost their lives? Do you exploit this glory so you can spend your nights among women and lady's maids?"

President Bourguiba took us back to the long lines of the poem, "Malik al-Hazin," [the Sorrowful Malik] which tells the legend of a bird that sacrificed himself so his children would not starve. Bourguiba appeared to have an infallible memory. In fact his observations appeared to be accurate as he repeated, "son festin de mort, il s'affaise et chancelle" so as to comment to us, "The poet broke the rule here for the sake of the meter. For how can a bird lower itself and then collapse?" Then he added, "Alors il se souleve, il ouvre son aile."

Then he translated, "Then he rises, spreading his wing. And here too the bird [sic?] erred for a bird spreads both its wings and not one wing."

We were almost through with lunch when President Bourguiba went back to reminiscing about the years of his childhood. He said, "My mother told me that our family and my uncle's family cooked our food in the same kitchen and that its walls became dark as a result of the dense smoke from the firewood. Resentments prevailed and jealousy crept into people's hearts. This was because my mother had sons, and this was something to boast and be proud of, but the wife of my uncle, Hasan had only daughters. Naturally, there were disputes and arguments because the brothers lived in the same house. The disputes began with the women and ended with the brothers."

Prime Minister Mzali told me here, "It may be that the fact that President Bourguiba is the youngest of his brothers and the fact that he was born to his mother a long time after a period during which she had had no children may have left profound marks on his social and psychological makeup. He was the first advocate and champion of the liberation of women and their deliverance from 20 centuries of enslavement to the social mores. Women had children, gave birth, reared children, pleased men and sought to carry out their orders as though they were machines. Women did not respect their feelings, their temperaments or their natures. Today, everything has changed."

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I bid the president farewell with a feeling of joy and with a great sense of his loyalty to his mother, to women and to his love. He fell in love with Mrs Wassila Ben Ammar in the forties, and he continued to love her until he married her in 1963. Since then, he has been working for Tunisia. With him, women have a special standing.

I bid him farewell, thinking how the history of nations is willfully written in advance and how President Bourguiba, despite his advanced years, is still the man for the future.

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